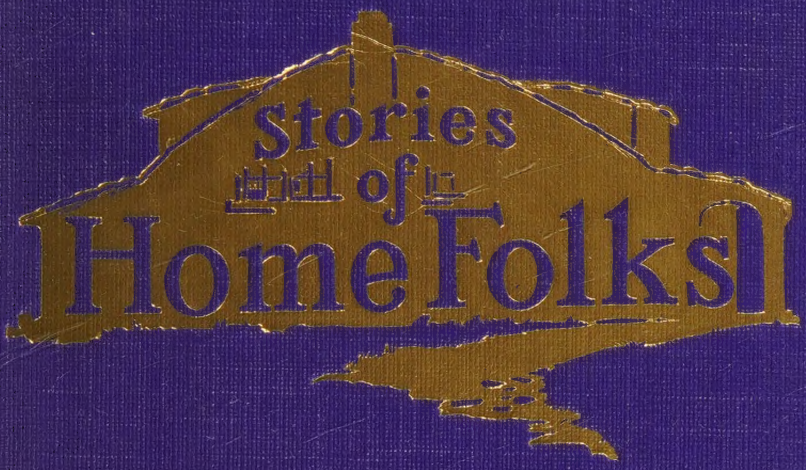
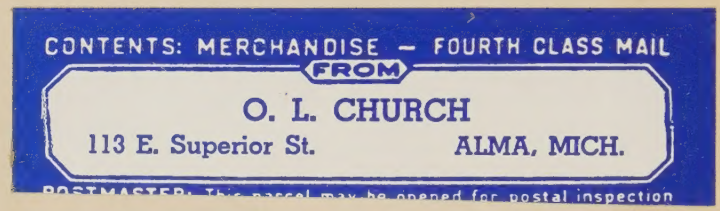


Mabel Hale


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Stories of Home Folks


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Stories of

HOME FOLKS

ACTUAL INCIDENTS FROM
REAL LIFE



By
Mabel Hale

Author of Beautiful Girlhood
and
The Hero of Hill House

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TO THE READER

I look backward with sacred memories to the home into which I was born, and reflect with pleasure upon the influences that molded my life. If my life has been profitable, much of that profit is due to the influence of a noble, manly father, and a godly, womanly mother—HOME FOLKS that God smiled upon.

When Life pressed me out of my childhood's home into the world I was brought into touch with other homes and HOME FOLKS. Every one of these homes has interested me, and from every one of these HOME FOLKS I have learned something either to condone or to emulate.

When the time came that the responsibility of home-making fell upon my shoulders and I learned first-hand of its problems, I found my greatest help to be in learning of the experiences of these other HOME FOLKS, striving to avoid their mistakes, and to profit by their successes.

This book, true to its name, is a collection of short stories and incidents describing the experiences of HOME FOLKS that have been told to me, or which I have learned for myself by observation or actual experience. It lays no claim to being a book of wisdom, with advice for every emergency in life. It merely tells the experiences of HOME FOLKS in the common walks of life.

The purpose of this book is one, and one only—

to encourage HOME FOLKS in the business of building homes where Christ and his gospel are honored. We often hear it said that the home is breaking down, but I have found many young people contemplating marriage, many young wives and husbands, many parents of little children, and many fathers and mothers of the youth of our land, as well as older people, who are endeavoring to make homes in the real sense of the word. The Christian home is not disappearing. We are glad of that. But we long to see more truly Christian homes.

The plan of the book is simple. The stories begin with the experiences of young people contemplating marriage; then the beginning of the new home; the children from infancy to maturity; and last of all the problems of old fathers and mothers and husbands and wives.

Mabel Hale

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STORIES OF HOME FOLKS

THE CHRISTIAN HOME

THERE is no institution upon earth as pure, as simple, and as satisfying as a Christian home. He who builds such a home builds well, making for himself a shelter, a stronghold, and a tower, against which all the tides of life may come and find his habitation impregnable.

A Christian home is a shelter for the HOME FOLKS from the storms of life. No matter how the winds may rage, the thunders may peal, and lightnings flash, all are safe and secure. When storm-clouds rise and obscure the sun, and winds of adversity chill or scorch, he who has a Christian home turns his steps thither, enters in, and is safe. The rains may dash upon it, the cold of snow lie about it, the pelting hail may clatter around it, the stinging frost may bite it, or the soft dew of heaven may moisten it; all within is the same—love, light, hope, and peace.

A Christian home is like a lighthouse tower from whose windows the beacons flash warning to the storm-tossed mariners on the sea of life. Many a weary wanderer who has lost his way and fears the breakers roaring on before is guided safely past the rocks because of the lights that shine out from Christian homes. And if perchance one of its own HOME FOLKS should wander away, the lights from the

windows of home will guide the wanderer back again, safe in the old sweet tower.

A Christian home is like a living fountain whose waters flow forth continually, blessing everything they touch. Like a living stream whose banks are green verdure and shaded by the leafy tree, so the lives of HOME FOLKS that come from the Christian home go on to eternity, ever blessing as they go.

A Christian home is like a fortress, to which its inmates run, and closing the gates defy the worst their enemies can do. Their walls are firm and their weapons strong, so that evil and ungodliness must stay on the outside no matter how loudly they clamor to come in. Happy is the nation filled with such fortresses.

The Christian home is the foundation of freedom. Rob a nation of its Christian homes, take away their influence, and soon that nation returns to the carnage and strife of the barbarian. He who builds a Christian home trains up good citizens for his country.

A Christian home is the happiest, most heavenly place on earth. It matters not if the house is a palace or a cottage; whether it faces the busy street or the wide country fields; whether the HOME FOLKS are learned or unlearned—race, color, nationality, are all the same; Christ enthroned, the home made Christian, and the results are the same. He who builds a Christian home builds well.

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEW HOME

As dawning day flings its colors high
In rosy hues on a cloudless sky,
Announcing the passing of the night,
Promising the day be full of light,
So comes the wedding day.



MR. WOODCOCK'S SINGING-SCHOOL

YOUNG folks nowadays are altogether frivolous. All they think of is getting a sweetheart and going somewhere. Now, when I was young," begins the aged critic. But there was something very modern in the outcome of Mr. Woodcock's singing-school.

This singing-school was held in District Number Eight, in the new schoolhouse, the next year after it was built. This schoolhouse was named "Centennial," because it was built the year the Declaration of Independence had been signed one hundred years. There had been a Sunday-school in the new schoolhouse for several months, and Mr. Woodcock began his singing-school at the invitation of the Sunday-school. It was believed that such a course would increase the efficiency of the Sunday-school song service.

Ten years earlier than this there had not been a dozen settlers in a forty-mile radius of "Centennial," but the last few years had seen a great immigration of settlers. These men were heads of families, and those families were growing up just as rapidly as families do now. There was absolutely nowhere to go except to Sunday-school and the occasional dance. But there was a religious sentiment in this settlement that frowned on the dance and made the singing-school like a great oasis in the desert lives of

these aspiring youths. The young people were indeed enthusiastic over the school, and all of them for miles in all directions enrolled at the very beginning. A few of the older folks came too, but not enough to frown down the youthful spirits that predominated.

The first night the crowd came. It was before the days of automobiles, and even the old-fashioned buggy had not been introduced in that country. So these young people came on horseback, two to a horse, in lumber-wagons, and one boy in a spring-wagon, the only one in the community. (He was quite popular among the girls, we might notice in passing.)

At first the boys brought their sisters, but the interest in the school got a great impetus when they began exchanging sisters. This pairing of couples began the very first night, and was all through a very lively part of the exercises. All did not go with perfect smoothness. Two of the girls had a contest for the heart of one of the boys, and right when their efforts were at their highest, as was public interest in the race, the boy began going with another girl who had seemed entirely disinterested in the game.

Two of the boys contended for the hand of one of the fair ladies, and she swung back and forth, encouraging both of them, till she had her fill of flirtation, then made her choice and became the steady girl of the winner.

All this was very exciting, and perhaps took up more time and attention than their music did, tho they sang with all their might. Nothing so wonderful had ever happened in any of their lives as this singing-school, and no doubt nothing ever as thrilling came again to many of them.

At last the school was over. It had lasted three months, with a lesson once a week. The final exhibition was given, and Mr. Woodcock drove on to another community that desired his services. But the effects of his singing-school were far-reaching. John and Lavona, Frank and Priscilla, Joe and Maria, Martin and Debbie, George and Lida, and Harvey and Ellen, six couples, married before another year was gone. Every one of these young men obtained a piece of raw land, built a shack, bought a team and a few tools, and prepared to make on the virgin prairie a home for himself and his bride. Every one of those girls set to work to make quilts and feather-beds, and get together all she could for the new home.

And six families grew up on the wide, free prairie, and their children and grandchildren are a part of the warp and woof of the State and Nation now. Young people today have the same instincts that prompted the developments of Mr. Woodcock's singing-school, which as a courting academy was a great success.

NOT A ROSE FOR YOU

THE grey-haired doctor walked home from church that morning, his keen eyes seeing all the brightness and glory of the spring day. He was not only the village doctor, but the firm friend of all the inhabitants of Grovetown. The young people especially loved him and liked to confide in him even their most intimate affairs. This bright Sunday noon his walking companion was James Dey, and the two were talking familiarly. There came behind them the patter of horse's hoofs and the rattle of a buggy, and the two stepped aside to let the rig pass. In the buggy were three girls, who greeted the men as they passed. When they were out of hearing James said to the doctor a little shyly, "Doctor, have you noticed what a fine girl Rose Allen is? It seems to me she grows more beautiful all the time."

"Yes, James, I have noticed Rose. Why should I not? I ushered her into the world and have watched over her in all her childish illnesses. She is budding into a beautiful young woman," answered the doctor.

"She will be a wonderful Rose to bless someone's life," continued James, hoping that the doctor would understand his meaning.

"Yes, she is a beautiful, pure white Rose, James, but not for you to pluck," and the clear eyes of the kind old man looked into the startled eyes of the boy.

"And why not for me?" asked James in a strained voice.

"I shall tell you now, my boy, while it is not too late. Life has not played fair with Rose, or rather her parents for several generations back have been unfair to her. You know that Mrs. Allen is in the asylum and has been since Rose was a baby. Her family has a strong strain of insanity, and Mr. Allen's people are not free from the same taint. Rose, herself, has always been of a nervous temperament, susceptible to every exciting emotion. If she chooses life well she may make it through safely herself, but some of her children might be doomed for a life of misery. And Rose herself can hardly stand the strain of bringing children into the world. I think, James, if Rose marries and children come into that home, it will be with her as it was with her mother. It would mean a life of the deepest sorrow and disappointment that can be meted out to man. James, there is too much risk. Beautiful as the Rose is, it should bloom alone. For you to pluck it would only crush the Rose and leave a lifetime of thorns in your own hand."

James said nothing for a while and then asked, "You think that Rose should never marry, I suppose?" and there was a hard sound in his voice.

"I am sure of it, James, sure as can be," was the answer.

"It does not seem right that she should suffer for the mistakes of her parents. She has always had

a lonely life, and it seems cruel to banish her to a lifetime of loneliness," plead the boy.

"Yes, James, but not so hard as banishing her to the bars of an insane asylum, or bringing other little doomed creatures into the world to suffer," answered the doctor.

"But is there not a chance that the result would not be as you predict?" questioned James.

"Yes, there is a fair chance that she would make it through all right," said the doctor with a sigh, for he saw what the boy's decision would be.

James married Rose Allen a year and a half later, and the doctor's worst fears were realized. And the thorns pierced deep into the heart of the boy who did not listen.

THE HOPE-BOX

THE GIRL was laughing and blushing, her eyes lighted with a glory shining only from perfectly happy hearts, as she lifted the lid of the heavy chest and touched its contents with a caress.

"I want you to see the things I have in my hope-box," she said, and began lifting her treasures out one by one that I might see and admire her handiwork and enter with her a little way into her happiness. There were bed linens and table linens, towels of all kinds, scarfs and spreads, and old-fashioned quilts and new-fashioned coverlets, aprons and house dresses, everything that her busy brain and fingers could plan and fashion for use and beauty in the home to be.

"What do you think of my hope-box?" she asked after I had admired and exclaimed over every beautiful thing.

"So far as it goes, Dorothy, it is perfect," I said heartily.

"So far as it goes! what is lacking?" she asked in surprize.

"I have other things in mind, things it seems to me more necessary than any of this," I said. "Now for instance health."

"I cannot make health. I get that from nature along with my eyes and the freckles on my nose," she said with a smile.

"But we do make health. The manner of dress,

the diet, the kind and amount of exercise, the supply of fresh air, and many other things make or unmake health. The strongest girl can waste her health, and the frailest can build her health. Dorothy, every girl ought to come to marriage with good health and right health habits."

"I suppose so," she said soberly. "What else ought I to have in my hope-box?"

"Every girl contemplating marriage, contemplating womanhood in fact, should know how to keep house properly. Cooking, laundry, sweeping, dusting, everything that goes with house-keeping," I said.

"But girls hope not to have much of such work to do when they are married," she parried.

"Every homemaker must either keep a house or direct the keeping of the house, and either task demands an understanding of housework," I answered.

"What else is needed in my hope-box?" she asked more humbly.

"Every girl should know how to buy, cut, and make her own dresses to advantage," I proposed.

"And what else?" she asked.

"One item more it seems to me every girl should know, and that is the ability to choose and buy food for her family economically," I answered handing her the articles to put back in her box. Soberly she worked for a while, and then said, "I am sure your kind of hope-box is more practical than mine. But the work it will take to have it complete!"

"Yes, Dorothy, it means work and close application, but is not a home worth it? What is more beautiful than home-making? Those things are the real things. Beautiful furnishngs are to be desired, of course, but they will not make a home. The things I have been speaking of go far in the art of home-making."

A TALK WITH LARRY

JOHN WILSON was pastor at Farmerton, a thriving town not many miles from one of our larger cities. Pastor Wilson took his task seriously, and it was with genuine concern that he studied the letter in his hand. He wanted to do right by every one of his people, but such delicate problems came up that the wisdom and art of a sage could not hope to meet them unembarrassed. This present problem was a real one, involving the life happiness of two of his young people. What should he say, and what should he do? Again he read the letter. It was from his own sister, and he knew it was not written on a sudden impulse.

> "Dear John:
>
> "I am writing you of a thing that seems to me of the greatest importance. You know that Lela Martin and Larry Fox are to be married next month. I have learned that Larry is tainted. He was under treatment here for months last year. I cannot bear for Lela to enter into a contract that might result in such disaster as a marriage of this kind is likely to. I think she ought to know. I had thought better things of Larry. Do what you think best.
>
> "Laura"

John Wilson knew human nature well enough to understand the delicacy of the situation. Lela was a pure, innocent girl, but she was wholly in love with Larry, and to break the engagement now would almost ruin her life. If she was informed of this matter and went on and married Larry a seed of sus-

picion would be planted that would ruin their happiness, even if disease did not. What was the right thing to do? Like a flash the right path was plain before him. He should go to Larry.

Larry Fox was a young traveling salesman who had come to Farmerton a stranger a few months before. He had joined himself to Pastor Wilson's congregation and so far as his pastor had ever before known had conducted himself as a gentleman and a Christian should. He had from the first shown a preference for Lela Martin, one of the fairest of young women, and a warm friendship had grown between them which had soon ripened into love. They were to be married in a month.

The Pastor wrote a short note to Larry, asking him to call at the parsonage the next time he was in town, for his business kept him away much of the time. This note was a surprize to Larry, and while it was not curt in the least, it yet carried with it some of the writer's deep concern. Larry determined to see his pastor at the very first opportunity.

The door-bell rang sharply and Mr. Wilson stepped to answer it. Before him stood the straight, manly form of Larry Fox. "I am here, Mr. Wilson, at your request," he said for greeting.

"Come in, Larry," said the minister kindly. When they were seated Larry said, "What is it, Brother Wilson, that you want to speak to me about?" And the minister told him of the letter he had received and its contents.

"Larry, you know what a prize you are getting, I am sure. Lela is as pure and true as human kind exists. She is worthy of the best. Is this letter true, Larry? Are you tainted? Are you fit to enter into marriage with a girl like Lela?"

Larry Fox sat for a few moments silent before his pastor, and then he spoke. "Mr. Wilson, I thank you for coming to me as man to man in this. I am sorry to say that the content of that letter is true. I got into trouble, into wrong company, and I fell. But I am fighting back, and I have been dismissed as cured. For almost a year my blood has tested pure. I have thought it safe to marry. My physician tells me that it is perfectly safe. I would not endanger Lela's health and happiness for the world."

"Does Lela know what you have told me? You have no more right to marry her with a blot on the past than she has to marry you with a blot on her past, if that blot is hidden and unconfessed," said the pastor kindly.

"Yes, Mr. Wilson, I have told her all, keeping back not a thing. I wanted her to know what she was doing. Truly, I have tried to be fair and right in this," said Larry humbly.

"I am glad that you have been fair to her, and glad, so glad, that I have come to you about this. I could not have performed the ceremony with good conscience if I did not have your word that everything is all right. If you have told Lela, there is no

danger of a loss of confidence, but if this information had come to her in any other way, while it might not have destroyed her love at once, it would have given a foundation for suspicion that might bring you both much trouble later on," said the minister.

"Are there other things you wished to talk to me about?" asked Larry. "Remember I have no father, and I have missed that companionship and instruction that a father should give his son."

"Yes, Larry, I have wanted to talk to you, but we have had so little opportunity to become intimately acquainted that I have not felt free to speak to you till now. Marriage is such a sacred thing, and its benefits so far reaching, that to spoil it anywhere and turn those blessings into curses is a crime. Have you learned the self-restraint and temperance that a married man ought to know?"

"I do not understand exactly what you mean," answered the young man.

"I mean this, that marriage is the state of most intimate relationship possible to mankind, and that the health, happiness, and success of both the man and the woman, mentally, physically and spiritually, depend upon the use that is made of this intimate relationship. If you come to marriage, not merely for pleasure and gratification, but for the fulfilment of your God-given powers, giving to the wife the kindness, care, and deference that is her right, treating her always as the weaker vessel and the object of your protection, and holding yourself in careful

self-control so that in nothing you make demands unfair to her, then you may hope to have the best from life. But if you think first of your own will, your own desires, then you will offend her instincts, crush her spirit, and have for yourself the broken and bruised remnant of your now glowing Lela. I am wondering, Larry, if you have in your youth learned to hold yourself in leash, or have you run with a free hand?"

"I fear," said Larry after a moment's sober thought, "that I have run with a pretty free hand. I have done about as I pleased. Mother has had hard work to control me from childhood up, and since my middle teens I have run wild till the last year or a little more. I am trying to learn obedience to my Master and Lord, but I confess it is hard work. But I want to do right by Lela. I truly do."

"I believe you, Larry, and I know that you will have a harder fight than if you had years of self-control behind you. But if you set to work with God's help to be master of your own spirit and flesh, allowing reason and judgment to rule instead of inclinations and impulses, I believe you can make it, but it is a life-time schooling, and a daily battle. We trust Lela to you with our blessing, and we are expecting you to make her a good husband."

"Thank you for your kind advice, and for your confidence. I want to make good," answered Larry rising to take his leave.

HOMER'S LITTLE BROTHER

HOMER TILLISON had moved with his parents to the wide, comfortable farm-house at the cross-roads a mile from the village. From the very first he was made welcome in the social circle of the village and country-side, and he became a general favorite. He was jolly and sociable, always ready for a good time, yet never rough or unmanly. But none of his new friends were quite as pleasing to him as Blanche Mortin, the daughter of their nearest neighbor. Very early their friendship blossomed into real love, and before the first season was over they were engaged to be married.

Blanche Mortin was a sensible girl, who looked forward to her new life with Homer seriously, desiring to build the best home possible. She was a girl of high ideals and ambitions, gentle in manner and speech, and believing that these were the marks of real quality in others as well as herself. She gave Homer credit of having as high ideals and intentions as herself.

The Tillisons were a large family, and Homer was one of the elder children. A warm friendship sprang up between Blanche and the younger brothers and sisters of Homer Tillison, and from little things she heard fall from baby lips she began to wonder. It seemed impossible that such things could be true, yet children were very liable to tell the whole truth in

a very abrupt manner, and Wisdom whispered to Blanche that she should take notice.

"Blanche," said little Vernon Tillison one day, "Minnie and I wish you would live at our house all the time." Blanche's face grew pink, but she answered naturally, "And why do you wish that?"

"Because," was the unexpected answer, "Homer is nice when you are here. He never gets cross when you are around. We like him best that way."

Blanche wondered at that, and when time after time Vernon or Minnie let fall something that added to the impression made by that first speech, she could not help questioning in her mind the truth about Homer. Could it be that he was surly around home? Would he make one of those unreasonable men who snap and snarl at the very ones he loves best? Was he pretending the kindness and appreciation that he showed to his family when she was about? Could it be that he saw such a pose was expected? Was he sincere with her?

One forenoon in late summer an errand called her to the Tillison home. It was at an hour when Homer would be in the field and she did not feel the shyness that held her when she knew he would be about. She would not have appeared to be running after Homer for anything. This morning she came up to the back door from across the field, and she heard voices, angry voices, in the kitchen. And one voice was Homer's. He was scolding in a very rough manner some child for an accident that had just happened.

As she came a step nearer she heard little Minnie sob, while Vernon was answering back with all the fire of his little soul. Mrs. Tillison said pleadingly, "Homer, Homer, it was an accident. She did not mean to spoil it."

It was the answer that Homer gave his mother that made Blanche's face grow exceedingly grave. Like a flash she looked down the years to the time a son and daughter with herself as the mother might receive just such unkind treatment at his hands.

She turned and went round the house and came to a side door. They caught a glimpse of her as she passed a window, and the storm was calmed. Homer was his sociable, pleasant self when she came in, and if she had not heard with her own ears she could not have believed that two minutes before he had been the surly fellow she had heard through the open door. Minnie was yet in tears, and Vernon was plainly angry.

Blanche stated her errand at once, and in a few moments was on her return trip. Little Vernon met her at the back gate and walked with her a part of the way home. He greatly admired Blanche and he wanted a friend just now to tell his troubles to.

"Homer is fierce this morning," he confided. "He scolded Minnie for breaking a little bottle he wanted to use. He could get another. She did not mean to do it. He doesn't have to be cross all the time."

She comforted the little lad, but her own heart ached as if it would break. Something deep in her

heart was telling her that it was too great a risk she was taking. If Homer was like that in his family now he would be the same after while. If he could speak roughly to his mother he would feel the same privilege toward his wife.

It was hard to tell Homer what she had heard and what his words had told her, but she faced him bravely and told him all. "Homer, I am very sorry, but I could never be happy if I had to fear your anger all the time. Unless you can change your ways completely I can never marry you. O Homer, how could you speak to your mother and the little ones like that."

There was little that Homer Tillison could say. What Blanche said to him was only what his mother had tried to say many times. He remembered many times when she had said, "Son, this habit of irritability will ruin your life."

"Blanche, I know I have allowed a bad habit to grow on me. I am sorry, and I shall try to break it," he said at last, humbly, after they had talked a long while.

"I am sure your little brother will know when you have overcome," she answered.

BESSIE'S SPITE WORK

BESSIE LYON was the only girl and the youngest child of the family, and from her infancy spoiled as a child could be. Her brothers teased her and aggravated a naturally quick temper, and she cultivated an attitude of independence that resented any interference on their part in her conduct. Nevertheless they took a brotherly interest in all her affairs and were quite free to give their advice when they thought she needed it. There were frequent squalls in the home when the family bark seemed fairly to tremble with the fury of the tempest, but the squalls passed by and Bessie knew she had the kindest brothers in the world.

Walter was two or three years her senior, and her companion in all her excursions out with the younger set. So congenial were the two of them that neither felt the need of other company until Bessie was in her nineteenth year. Then she began going out with young men of the community, and Walter had his own sweetheart. Still he kept a close oversight of Bessie, ready to warn her if she was about to get into bad company. This voluntary oversight of his was sometimes burdensome to Bessie and she chafed under it. That was the reason she gave an ear when Bernard Glenn asked her to go to the party at Miller's. Bernard was a rough fellow, with questionable habits. He was not in favor at all in the best society of the neighborhood and particularly

detested by Walter Lyon. When Bernard had asked her she thought of the look that would come on Walter's face when he knew, and a sudden desire to shock her brother took possession of her. She accepted with one of her sweetest smiles, and the gratified Bernard went away, never dreaming that smile was meant for her brother.

Bessie did not tell Walter who her companion for the evening would be, altho he hinted several times about it. The shock would be more intense to see her there with Bernard, where he would have no opportunity to say anything.

The evening was not a success to Bessie. She felt keenly the looks of disapproval that were cast in her direction, and was mortified by Bernard's crudeness and by the familiarity he manifested toward her. If Walter had asked her she would have accepted his company home and left Bernard to his own thoughts, but Walter was too angry to make any advances. She insisted that Bernard take her straight home, and she was already in her room when Walter came. He spoke her name in the hall as he went to bed, but she made no answer. It was noon the next day when he saw her first, and then he said all the things she had expected him to say, and more too.

"Bessie Lyon, what did you mean? Mother, did you know she went with Bern Glenn? Bern Glenn, the roughest fellow in the whole community, and unfit for any lady's company! I am ashamed to

lift my head. Everybody was shocked. Bess, what did you mean?"

"Who made you my boss? Seems to me if there is anything to be said Mother ought to say it. You think you can boss me all the time, and I thought I would show you once that I do not have to do just as you say," she raved, forgetting her own shame at her escapade.

Mother tried to pacify the angry boy and girl, but she could do nothing, and things were said on both sides that they regretted as long as they lived.

"I say this much," shouted Walter, "my sister shall not keep company with Bernard Glenn. If no one else will take it in hand I will. Hear me, Bess, never again be caught with that fellow."

"Keep me from it if you can," she railed back as she fled from the room. Just at that moment she was more angry than ever in her life. She threw herself across the bed and wept, and at every sob her feeling of outraged innocence was stronger.

Slipping down the stairs she found the way clear and fled to the orchard, her childhood's place of retirement from the storms of life. Her heart was bitter with thoughts of revenge and spite. She wanted to do the thing that would hurt Walter most, no matter what it was. She thought of many things, but nothing seemed quite severe enough.

She was down at the gate near the road when a buggy came driving by. It was Bernard Glenn. He stopped, got out, and came to her just as if she had

been waiting for him. He asked the cause of her tear-stained face, and the whole story was poured out to him. He knew Walter's contempt for him and had often ached for revenge, and now he saw not only a chance to hurt Walter but the whole community, besides getting the girl he admired.

"Bessie, it is a shame the way that fellow runs over you. Bess, we have never talked such things much, but let us show them a thing or two. We can go over to town this very afternoon and be married. Then you need never be run over by that kid again."

The thought was too awful. She detested Bernard, but there was nothing in the world that would hurt Walter like this. She found herself chuckling at the thought of his chagrin. "Never be found in his company again." Indeed, she would show Walter she had some spirit. For once she would have her spite out on him for his bossiness.

In the week that followed all the joy went out of Bessie's life. When she came to herself and realized that her silly anger had rushed her into this awful trap, when she saw the pale and troubled faces at home, when she left that dear home roof no longer a member there, when she felt Bernard's clammy hands and coarse caresses, it seemed to her that she would go mad.

But she had her spite, a whole life of it.

HUSBAND AND WIFE

The world again is created new,
Inhabited only by "we two";
Out on life's sea we begin to float,
On silver sea in a golden boat.
But strong winds blow, and clouds arise,
Troubling the sea and clouding the skies;
Side by side, each holding an oar,
Rowing together we reach the shore.



MEETING THE MONEY PROBLEM

LAURA ELLIS and Mark Darrow were to be married and their wedding day was fast approaching. Laura loved Mark with all the fervor of her young heart, yet as the day approached she found strange misgivings arising in her mind, clouding her happiness. Would she and Mark make a success of life?

The Ellis family was not altogether a happy one, tho few outside the home circle knew it. But the twenty years of Laura's life spent in that home circle had taught her all the hidden unhappiness. She knew the heart-burnings, the struggle for appearances, the endeavor to keep every dark thing covered, the tears and disappointments, and plain heart-aches. Sometimes she blamed her father and again she blamed her mother. She loved them both, and she believed they loved each other; but why the misunderstandings, the short words, the long silences that often marred the happiness of the home?

Now that Laura was about to be married she faced the problems of her parents' home with a new scrutiny, demanding in her own heart an understanding that would make her able to escape the rocks that had well-nigh wrecked them. And to her inquiry there was but one answer—money. Yes, money was at the bottom of all their unpleasantness.

Her mother would plan and scheme for the household expenses, for the new clothes she and Laura needed, and at last would come to her father with

request for money for the outlay. Father was always surprized and certain that there had been or would be unnecessary extravagance. "You must remember that I am not made of money," he would say warningly, "we must be careful."

"You think we can live on nothing and keep up appearances," her mother would retort, "I never have anything nice, and I cannot dress Laura as I want to. And the house, too, needs refurnishing almost all over. But I would rather live in it like it is than wring a little money from you."

"Money, money!" her father would exclaim, "I wish I could have one day free from that cry for money." And at this her mother would burst into tears, and her father would fling out a bill which would at least partly cover the present need, and storm out of the room and the house. Sometimes her mother would buy what she believed was needed and allow the bills to come in, but at such times the storm was worse than ever.

"No, no," she and Mark must never live like that.

Soberly Laura faced the matter. She read all that she could find in household magazines and books on home management, and she believed she saw a way out. She would talk with Mark about it.

She found just the opportunity she desired. They were out on the broad front porch and were all alone. Now was the chance to talk it out. But she found it embarrassing to begin. Money matters had never been mentioned between them.

"Mark," she began, "you never have told me about your income, just what you can allow for housekeeping expenses and such things, and I think we ought to understand about it before we are married."

And when she saw the embarrassed look on his face, or was it only surprize that she had brought up such a subject, she continued quickly, "Oh, Mark, I do want us to make a success, and so many fail because of money."

"Laura, I wish I could give you a home like you are going out of and all the money you could want, but I cannot do that. I promise, tho, to do the very best I can," he said humbly.

"I know, Mark, that you will do the best you can, but I want to know what to expect. Let us count up our household expenses and see what they will be, and you estimate the amount you believe you can safely spare for weekly or monthly household accounts, and we shall see how closely they compare. If I am expecting too much, give me time to adjust my plans to what you can afford. I am willing to do on just as little as possible if I can only know what to expect; but I do not want to plan and then you drop my plans because there is not money enough. Why can we not be partners in this and plan together?" she reasoned.

Mark began then and told her just where he stood financially, exactly what his income was, and the liabilities that he must meet, and together they estimated what could safely be used regularly for ex-

penses and yet save a little out of each month's salary. Then they went over their expense list. Fortunately Laura knew the cost of food and clothes. A certain amount was set aside for clothes, another for rent, another for food, and another for light and heat. They tried to count in all their needs, and then adding them together they found that the sum was considerably more than what they thought best to use. Then began the whittling down. It was all very exciting. Mark went home that night with a lighter heart than usual, and Laura felt that a great victory had been won.

When they were married, of course they found that the budget they had built that evening had to be revised in almost every item. But they had the idea. Laura took the money that Mark handed to her for household expenses, the amount they had agreed together to use for that purpose, and she kept household expenses within its bounds. There was perfect understanding between them.

They had sailed clear of the rocks that made home life miserable in the Ellis family.

CONJUGAL LOVE

CONJUGAL LOVE is that love which binds husband and wife together. Like much that is in nature it is deep and mysterious. We can learn of its laws and comprehend something of its nature, but its source and cause lie deeper than we can see. It is part of God's plan, and it is the foundation of the home. It is the binding force that makes a pure home-life possible.

Conjugal love is not spontaneous. Many young people considering matrimony think that it is, but they are mistaken. Infatuation and love of a certain extravagant and emotional type are often spontaneous and sudden, but conjugal love, being meant for durability, is built upon a better foundation. True love must include a recognition of worth, not be a mere stirring of passion. Falling in love is often a very dangerous act, for it may lead to marriage with one not suited for conjugal love at all.

Conjugal love will not thrive without cultivation. It is not a wild plant waxing luxuriant in spite of circumstances. It must be tended carefully, watered regularly with kindness and good-will, dug about diligently with appreciation and tenderness; thoroughly weeded of all suspicion and distrust. Every choking blade of indifference and coldness must be killed. And then the precious plant will grow and bear fruit that will satisfy the heart so long as life shall last.

Conjugal love must be reciprocal. A mother will go on loving a wayward son, but conjugal love is not so. He who tramples on the tender heart-string of his companion shall reap his harvest in loss of the confidence of that companion.

Conjugal love is unselfish. It is always willing to give as much as it gets or more than it receives in return for what it receives. The husband thinks of his wife as to how he may please her, and the wife thinks of her husband as to how she may please him. His happiness is full if she is satisfied; her happiness is complete if he is happy. He sacrifices gladly for her: she is just as glad to sacrifice for him. It is this unselfishness of love that makes it so soul-satisfying.

Conjugal love brings rest to the affections. He who is happily married has all the love-tendrils drawn in and centered in the wife of his choice. He rests safely "under his own vine and fig-tree," his neighbor's garden having no attraction for him. His wife goes happily on with her share in life's responsibilities, keeps their home, cooks their food, rears their children, plans for their happiness, never once mistrusting or doubting the man of her choice. He returns from the toils of each day, from the conflicts in the business world, from the temptations and pitfalls that are catching many of his comrades, to the certain felicities of his own fireside. He is safe.

BEGINNING RIGHT

A YOUNG Englishman was brought under an unusually good Christian environment, and was influenced by it, but he did not allow real conviction for sin to settle on his heart, remaining the same care-free, happy-go-lucky youth he had always been. He met a young woman whom he loved and desired to marry. He wooed her in his merry, mad-cap way, and won her heart. Their wedding day drew near. So near had it come that the next day was the one appointed.

This young man was riding home as the evening shades came on, and his mind ran something like this: "Tomorrow is my wedding day. I shall enter an entirely new phase of life. This irresponsible life must cease, for I now shall have a home and family to care for. I, who have always been free of care, shall be the head of a home. I shall have the happiness of a good woman in my hand to give or to take."

This responsibility loomed before him in immense proportions. And the angle his thoughts next took only sank him deeper into the realities of life. "And I shall no doubt become the father of children. Little, innocent children will be given into my hands to rear—for what? I want my children reared for God. But I do not know God. I have been foolhardy enough to contemplate this grave step without God. It is a wonder God has not struck me down, so callous have I been concerning my duty."

A weight of sin and woe took hold upon him, and he felt himself the worst of men. He had heard enough preaching to know it was the Spirit of God talking to his heart, and he made a resolve then and there to seek God till he knew he was pardoned of all his sins.

Hastening his horse, which had been allowed to loiter, he hurried home and went directly to his room. Bowing there before God he prayed, "O Lord, I am unworthy to come in thy presence, but I need thee. I am about to take upon myself the greatest responsibility of life, and I want my home to be Christian. But I do not know just how to find thee. Show me, Lord; guide me to thyself. I give up my sins. I forsake them all. I want only thy will in me."

Before his mind came the laughs and jeers of his acquaintances, but his face was set Godward, and he only prayed harder. He remained in earnest prayer for hours. He was not conscious of time so anxious was he to find God, and so alone and helpless did he feel with no one to guide him.

Before morning dawned he found sweet peace. He lay down for a few hours of refreshing slumber, and then rose, breakfasted, and prepared to go to the home of his bride. He must see her and tell her all that had happened to him, and persuade her to join with him in this new life.

When he came she was already dressed, and the guests had begun to arrive. But he asked a short while with his beloved alone. When this wish was

granted he told her of his conversion and his deep concern for her that she might begin their new life together with him, with Christ enthroned supreme in their hearts. And she listened to his pleading, bowed with him, and gave herself to God.

That night in their own home they took down their Bible and read, and kneeling, prayed, "Lord in heaven, thou hast been good to us in that thou hast heard our prayer and pardoned our sins. Now we begin our new life together, and we dedicate our home to thee, that thou mayest always be the head of this house."

And this vow and dedication were kept throughout their lives. They began home-life right, and God's blessings were upon them from the first, making them a light for him in their community.

A HOLE IN THE CARPET

AUNT MOLLY SEXTON put a shawl over her head and ran across the alley to the back door of her niece's home. She was always a welcome caller, and as was her way she opened the door without knocking. Just as she did this she heard the sound of undoubtedly angry voices. So she closed the door carefully, walked round to the front porch, stamped her feet as if freeing them of mud, and looked off down the street at something of interest there for a moment before she went to the door. She wanted plenty of time for the storm to calm before she went in.

Hal, the young husband of her equally young niece, opened the door for her. She smiled up at him in her usually friendly way, but he scowled at her fiercely, unable to get his angry countenance straight. Kitty was in tears, her head bowed over her arm. She looked up when she heard Aunt Molly's voice, and then burst into fresh sobs.

"What is the trouble, Kitty?" she asked, going over to the girl and stroking her hair.

"Hal has said such awful things to me. I never thought he could be so hateful. I—," began Kitty.

"I have said no more nor as much as you have," burst in Hal like a small child.

"What is it all about?" asked Aunt Molly bewildered.

"Hal says I am cranky and a vixen, and—"

"But what is it all about? Hal, can you enlighten me?" urged the older woman.

"She has accused me of being a brute, and of telling untruths," said Hal sullenly.

"But you do not tell me what it is about? Where did this all start?" urged Aunt Molly earnestly.

"Well, there is a hole in the carpet," said Kitty lifting her head.

"There is? Where?" asked Aunt Molly with interest.

"Over there in front of the fire," said Kitty pointing with a finger. Very gravely Miss Sexton stooped and scrutinized the hole.

"Yes," she said soberly," there is a hole in the carpet. But what about that?"

"Well, it has been burnt there," said Kitty," and—." Again Miss Sexton went over and looked at the hole. "Yes, I am sure it has been burned, for the edge is all black and charred. What has it to do with the trouble?"

"Hal says I dropped a coal on it when I was carrying fire to start the kitchen range, and I say a coal snapped out of the grate and did it." And with this confession Kitty again burst into tears, "He said *such* horrid things," she added.

"There is a hole in the carpet, you are agreed on that point. It was burned there, and you agree on that. How it was burned you do not know, and can only guess. And over that guess you quarrel. Can you not see, children, that in all the essential points

in this matter you perfectly agree? Here, I shall place this rug over the hole, and there is nothing in sight to make a quarrel at all. I think you can get the hole mended, and then the cause for your quarrel will all be gone. What is the use of all this storm?"

"But he said—," began Kitty.

"Words can pile up over anything. Hal, what has Kitty done to hurt you? Mind you, I do not want to hear what she said. What has she done?"

"Not a thing. I have acted like a baby," said Hal soberly.

"Hal hasn't done anything to me either," said Kitty.

"I came over to get some soda. While I go to the kitchen for it you children make up," said Aunt Molly sternly.

When she came back into the parlor a little later the storm was all over and the sun was shining brightly again. Hal was sitting on the arm of Kitty's chair and her arm was across his lap.

"Aunt Molly, we are so glad you came when you did and showed us how silly we have been," said Kitty.

"I am glad I happened to come. Now I hope you will make this experience a lesson to you. Every time you feel like quarreling come in and take a look at that hole in the carpet."

"I think we had better leave the hole right there as a reminder," said Hal, laughing as he opened the door for Aunt Molly to go home.

LILLIAN'S METHODS

LILLIAN and Jerome were married. I shall not tell you of their courtship, tho I might say that Jerome did not do all the courting. Jerome was an only son, used to quiet and privacy, a thorough student, and rising well in his chosen profession. Lillian was one of a family of very affectionate girls who roomed together in one large room upstairs and knew nothing of privacy and almost as little of studiousness. Nevertheless Jerome and Lillian married and went away for a whole month's honeymoon before they settled down to housekeeping.

The first few days were wonderful for both of them; then Jerome began having a smothered feeling. It was as if Lillian clung about his neck in such extreme expressions of endearment that she was shutting off an opportunity for him to breathe. He could hardly define the feeling himself, but it was far from satisfactory. By the second week he realized that his nature was revolting from her constant presence, and that he was longing for a little time to himself to think. If he had a thought all his own, she began teasing him to tell her, till he felt afraid to allow a really private thought to enter his brain. She was demanding all of him.

He had always slept alone, and the presence of her warm little body snuggled close to him kept him awake hours after she was asleep. So in order to get the rest he so much needed, he suggested one

evening that she occupy their room alone, and he find another. She looked at him in wild alarm and would know all the whys, and if he were tired of her, or if he were ill, or what could be the matter. Before she was done he told her about the whole truth. He gave her the number of the room he would take and said good-night to a pitiful little creature just ready to cry.

It was evident that she thought he would change his mind, but when he did not it was a very troubled little face he carried away in memory. But he slept and rested till about midnight, when there came a knock at his door, and a tearful voice asking to come in. He let her in, and she threw herself on the bed in a paroxysm of sobs, telling him she had wept herself sick. It was all too horrible to think that he was already tired of her, and she was sorry that she had ever married him if he could not be happy with her—and more and more such things. Of course he comforted her, calling himself a brute to hurt her so, and she crept into bed with him and in half an hour was sound asleep, while he tossed till morning.

He looked forward to their setting up housekeeping, believing that with her hands full of household duties she would give him more time to himself. He meant to have his office downtown, but she insisted that he get a house close to town so that he could use one room for his office, and he gave in. Then she managed to do her housework so that when he was in his office she could spend most of her time

with him. He wanted to spend all the time he could over his books, but she liked to talk and would break into his most serious thoughts with her light chatter.

He tried to explain to her, but she began to gather tears and said she thought husband and wife ought to be companionable, and she did not want him to feel lonely, and she thought he felt the same about her. But of course if he thought more of an old book than he did of her, she would not come in and bother. He did not mean that, and again he consoled her and brought the smiles, and the next day she was with him in the office the same as ever.

Months went on, and she needed his kindest attentions, and got them. She was happy in spite of her discomforts just because she had him every moment he could spare from his actual business. He believed that when the baby came her time would be taken up so that he could have time to study.

The baby came, but somehow or other Lillian managed to get her new duties over in such a way that she could spend most of the time with Jerome when he was in his office. He tried to do some studying at night, but for this Lillian was very unwilling.

"Jerome," she would plead, "you are gone all the forenoon and most of the afternoon, and when you are in your office you have your face in a book. Your wife needs you a little. It is only fair that I have your evenings." And she had them.

Months passed by that Jerome got no time for study, no time for improvement, no time to keep up

with his comrades in his profession. They began going ahead of him. His earnings did not increase as the family expenses increased, and Lillian found that she had to manage more and more carefully to keep inside the family income.

Jerome did not hold his head up with the same confidence that he used to have, and he was—yes, Lillian had to acknowledge it in her heart—making almost a failure in life. He was not rising. Sometimes she talked to him about it, and how he ought to be making as much as William and John. He said he had no chance, but she could not see why. She had been a good, faithful wife, careful and economical, and had helped him every way she could.

She wondered why Jerome would at these times make a helpless motion with his hands and shrug his shoulders.

She could not always understand Jerome.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE QUESTION ON WHY MEN CHANGE AFTER MARRIAGE

WHY do men change after marriage? Why are the little attentions that they shower on sweethearts forgotten or neglected when the sweethearts become wives?"

I am safe in saying that were this delicate subject brought up in any gathering of young married women the majority would be interested. It is a problem that has always confronted the young wife. She misses those little courtesies, the bonbons and roses and dainty gifts which he used to give her. Not that she doubts his love: but she longs for those forgotten things. Some wives have spent hours in weeping over this very thing.

But there is another side of the question.

A young man came into a car carrying a package which an older man, an acquaintance of his, accused him of getting at the florist's. The young man acknowledged that the accusation was true, and showed that he was happy in carrying the flowers to his friend.

"That is right, boy, go on doing that as long as you can, for it will soon be over and you will be like the rest of us," said the older man.

"No indeed! I intend to keep up these little courtesies. Lena likes flowers and is so pleased when I

bring them that I cannot afford to give it up when we are married," contended the younger man.

"Those were my sentiments, too," said the older man, "but I changed them after we were married a few weeks. When we had been settled in our new home a week, I stopped at the florist's and bought a bunch of her favorite roses and paid two dollars for them, and I fairly raced up the steps and placed them in her hands. I expected her to beam upon them and go into raptures as she used to do. But instead she looked at the tag in a most business-like way, then turned to me and said, 'Henry, did you pay two dollars for them? They are pretty, but do not do that anymore. We are keeping house now and cannot afford such things.' And there I was getting three times the wages that I had made when I first began carrying flowers to her.

"That rather discouraged me, but a few weeks later I tried again. I did not get flowers, but chose something useful. I was puzzled to know just what to get, but finally decided on a waist. I chose a clerk to wait on me who was about the size of my wife. When it came to choosing the color I tried to think back and remembered a scarf I had given her once which she liked so well. So I got her a waist of the same color. When I got home the little wife looked it over and said, 'Henry, blue is not my color. And this is hardly my style. I wish that after this you would let me buy my own clothes.' And I have been careful to let her do so.

"I do not want you to think that we quarreled. My wife and I have always got along well, and I am pleased with her. But we men have to learn that the wife we marry is quite different than the girl we court. But women are queer. I have found my wife crying a few times, and have finally got it out of her that it was because I never bought her anything."

This is the other side of the question.

THE WISE DECISION OF UNCLE RASTUS

AUNT SYLVIA, the wife of Uncle Rastus, was one who felt a call to service in the Master's vineyard. She loved her Master and Lord, and tho her service was a humble one, yet she gave almost her whole time to going about among those she could help, encourage, and lead to the Master.

Many were blest by her ministrations, and she loved her work. But often her home was neglected, or so her neighbors said, and there was a genuine sympathy aroused for Uncle Rastus.

Someone came to the humble home one day and found Uncle Rastus cooking his own dinner.

"Uncle Rastus, why do you allow your wife to run about as she does? Her place is here helping you. She is married; so let her keep her home."

But Uncle Rastus was not touched with these words of advice and sympathy. "Say," he said soberly, "did it ever occur to you how quickly God could get rid of Rastus Jenkins if he got in the way of his work? Why, man, it wouldn't take the Lord a whole day to put me out of the way."

REMODELING HUSBANDS

"AUNT LUCINDA," said Mrs. Ben Wilson to her neighbor, "I feel safe when I talk to you; so I am going to ask you a question. Is there any way a wife can break her husband of a really vexing habit?"

"That is a broad question, Mrs. Wilson," replied Aunt Lucinda.

"Well, it is Ben. I am ashamed to say a thing, for I have the kindest husband, and he is almost too good to me, except in one thing. He will stay away from home longer than I am expecting him to, and often I am worried and distressed. Not that I think that he is doing wrong, but I fear lest something has happened to him. I have had as long as six hours of torture in one night over this, and it is such a trial to me. I have talked to Ben, but he seems to think that I ought to be more restful and believe that he can by God's help take care of himself. I cannot get him to see the woman's side of the question."

"I see," said Aunt Lucinda. "My Henry is one of those 'come and go as I please' fellows," and I understand just what you are talking about."

"What did you do?" asked Mrs. Wilson eagerly.

"Well, I talked to him," said Aunt Lucinda, "and I scolded him some, but I never saw any good fruit from it. He is always quiet, and after a lecture he would get very quiet; or if I really seemed

worried he would pet me like a peeved child that needed quieting. But next time he would do just as he had been doing."

"That is just the way with Ben. All I have said has never done him one bit of good."

"It seemed tho, that I had some faults too," said Aunt Lucinda, "that were as hard for him as his faults were for me. They were just little things too, but very annoying for Henry. About this time he set in to remodel me to his notion and I did not like it a bit. I do not think he did so to get even with me, but he thought it would improve me if I should do differently. As for me I did not feel that I wanted to get rid of those habits right then. I did not think of myself as a child to be brought up, and I did not want him to think that way. I wanted to be a partner with him, not an understudy for him. I became quite dissatisfied with his undertaking. Then it occurred to me that my efforts might be having the same effect on him that his were on me. In fact, he looked just as I felt. So, because of the dissatisfaction I felt at being remodeled I decided to let my husband go on just as he was, and love him faults and all. He must have come to the same conclusion, for about the same time he quit trying to remodel me, and we have never taken up the task again."

"But does he still do those things that try you?" asked Mrs. Wilson.

"Sometimes he does," confessed Aunt Lucinda, "for habits are strong things, but I have quit being tried about them. I just remember that I have no more to put up with than he has."

"Perhaps you are right," said Mrs. Wilson thoughtfully. "It is hardly a wife's place to make her husband over."

"I believe this is one of the fruitful sources of domestic unhappiness," Aunt Lucinda continued. "The wife thinks that she can make her husband over to please herself, when if she could she would despise him for being so soft. It is about as bad a blunder for a man to try remaking his wife. But working together they can do a great deal for themselves in the remodeling process.

"One of the most beautiful things in the world is the old husband and wife grown into each other's hearts and ways till they even look alike. Such felicity is not found by the method of remodeling, but by mutual adjusting. If we cannot get the consent of our companions to a mutual-benefit association, it is about as well if we leave the remodeling process alone."

THE DIFFERENCE

HE HAD been in the embrace of a deep and refreshing sleep for more than an hour when she at last found time to go to bed. He had come in from a day in the fields thoroughly tired and as soon as his chores were done and his supper eaten he had lain down for his night's rest. She had tidied her kitchen, shut up the chickens, put the children to bed, brought a bucket of water from the well, and had done the many other things which mark the close of a farmer woman's day.

All the time she had been thinking that she was as tired as he, that he might have helped her till she could rest also, that he did not care how hard she had to work, that she was not appreciated; and as she pondered these thoughts she became more weary and heavy-footed. Her life seemed hard and dark and uninviting. It was so different from what she had pictured it.

She had thought he would always be kind. Now the sharp thing he had said when she was a little slow with dinner rankled in her heart. He had not considered that with garden-making and chicken-raising and three children to care for besides the house-work and cooking, she had her hands more than full. No one appreciated her efforts, and life was hardly worth while.

The next night she was getting ready for bed at almost the same late hour. He was already sound

asleep, as he had been the night before. She had done all the many things that had been her work then, but her thoughts were in an entirely different channel. He was worn out completely, she thought, and needed the rest. Her children were the sweetest, dearest cherubs on earth. It was a pleasure to live where she saw things growing. Her garden was a beauty, and her chickens were thriving well. She was tired, but what of that? It was a joy to be well, and able to work for those she loved.

She lay down with a glad heart and happy anticipation of the morrow.

What had made the difference? It was not in her environment, nor in the weariness of her body. No, not here.

That morning he had stopped on his way to the field and slipped his arm around her and planted a warm, fond kiss on her lips and told her what a brave little woman she was, and how much he appreciated her loyalty to him and their home. It had not taken him a moment to say all that he had said, but it had made her work like play all the day long. It had set the joybells ringing in her heart and had lifted her load of discouragement.

ONLY A KISS

Only a kiss, but it lifted the load,
And took the stones from a rocky road;
She was given courage again to try
By his tender kiss when he said good-by.

Only a kiss, but his heart was strong
To battle that day against the wrong;
He could not stoop to actions low,
After that kiss when she let him go.

He could not afford to leave her sad,
When only a kiss would make her glad;
Nor she to send him on life's pathway
Less the tender kiss to begin the day.

LEARNING WIFELY SUBMISSION

TO WHAT extent is the husband the head of the house? And has he a right to interfere with a wife's efforts in doing good? You many not agree with Mrs. Dale's decision, but it seems to me there is a lesson in her experience for many wives.

Mr. Dale's business kept him away from home much of the time. His wife was an energetic, warm-hearted woman, whose principal cause of happiness lay in her opportunities of doing good. To the many avenues into which these opportunities led his wife Mr. Dale made no objection; he even lent her encouragement.

They had no children, and Mrs. Dale found life very lonely in her husband's absence; besides, as the years rolled by, the craving of her heart for children became almost unbearable. And she found many children who needed mothers. From her point of view a mother craving a child and a child needing a mother were problems that placed together solved themselves. She then took into her home and care now and again little children who were in need of assistance.

But one day a child came into her home who was different. A door of her heart opened and let him in and held him there. Instead of having a little stranger with her for a while she wanted this child for her own. Mr. Dale, used to humoring her "whims," as he called them, gave his consent. But

it was not long until he saw what a difference having a child in the home would make. And because he had little natural love for children, and because this child was frail and not prepossessing, he formed more and more a dislike for him.

The child became more and more an entering wedge between the husband and wife. The wife loved the child with all her heart, perhaps to the husband it seemed to his exclusion. He began to feel like a boarder and outside the family circle.

When he saw how things were going he refused to give his consent to adopting the child and desired that a home be found for it elsewhere. But the wife clung to the child.

Sometimes I think that the love of childless wives is underestimated. Many think that mother-love is something inseparable from motherhood and do not realize the almost desperate love of a childless mother for the child of her adoption and care.

Mrs. Dale could not find it in her heart to give up the boy, and he stayed with them many months longer, and every month saw the family more divided.

One day Mrs. Dale was reading a book upon the secrets of a consecrated and successful Christian life, and she came to some suggestions upon submission. At once the Spirit of God applied these to her own heart, and she saw how defiant she had been in the struggle over the boy. She was alone and dared to give vent to her feelings. Falling upon her knees she poured out her heart to God to know and

understand his will and her duty. She put her love for the child in the background and asked only to know her plain duty. And as she saw it then, it was right that she submit to her husband's decision in the matter, put away the hopes and dreams of the boy's future, and give him up. It would have been easier to have buried him. But she yielded then to what she believed to be her duty and the will of God.

A few more weeks found her home again childless, and the hungry longing in her heart as great as ever. But beneath this was the knowledge that she had been submissive.

You say her husband should have been willing for her to have kept the child. Perhaps; but Christians have to adjust themselves to things as they are, not as they should be.

AN UNWRITTEN LETTER

CHARLES and Nellie Hill had been married ten years. Matters did not stand with them as they had stood in the first year of their married life. Then they had lived in one another's hearts and had found life sweet and satisfying. He had hurried home every evening, full of anticipation of her company, and she had been waiting for him with all of a sweetheart's ardor. He had enjoyed taking her out in the evenings then, but neither of them could remember the precise date of the last time they had been out together. Now she kept the home and the children, prepared his meals, and apparently meant little else in his life.

He provided well for the family in food and clothes, but the home was small and inconvenient, when he could well have afforded better. He had clubs and social friends where he spent most of his time evenings when he was in town. His business took him out of town a great deal. It seemed never to have occurred to him that his wife might pine for his presence and association, nor that she would enjoy an evening occasionally free from the care of the children. He liked to romp with them sometimes, but he knew nothing about their care and training.

Nellie lived only for their family. She felt the cooling of Charles's attentions, and she believed of his affections, with apprehension. She felt that they

were growing apart, and she tried at first to avert it. She gently inquired into his affairs, hoping to encourage him to confide in her, but he did not respond to her arts, and she thought he did not wish her to know what he was doing nor whom he had been with. The babies, too, took much of her time, and she tried to bear this burden alone so that he would have rest and quiet when he could be at home. It was always hard for her when he had to be away, tho she believed he was happier when on one of his trips.

He was gone frequently for a few days or a week, and he became careless about writing home. Not unusually he would come in asking Nellie to get his grip ready, return a little later to get it, and leave without telling where he was going or giving a promise of return. Sometimes he would be gone as long as two weeks without writing. When he came home he came in as blithely as if he had left only that morning.

One day he came in and made hasty arrangements for his departure, and Nellie did not ask him where he was going or when he would be back. She thought he did not care to tell her, and it did not occur to him that he owed it to her to explain his movements.

When he had been gone a few days one of the children took sick and a severe case of typhoid fever developed. The neighbors were kind, and Nellie had the best of medical skill, but the tenth day the child died. She did not send word to the child's

father, for she had no idea where he was and he had not written. It is hard to express the sorrow and anguish the woman felt through the sickness and burial of the child—sorrow for the loss of her child and distress for the desertion of her husband in the time of trial. Her heart became bitter toward him, and she felt that she never could forgive him for his neglect. This seemed to her a culmination of all his neglect of the past years, and the last thing necessary to break her heart.

After the funeral she closed the house, took the other children, and went home to her parents, where she knew she would receive kindness and affection. Her heart seemed turned entirely away from her husband and the father of her children. But before she left she wrote a letter, an answer to her husband's unwritten message, and left it on the dresser where he could find it when he would be pleased to come home again.

Charles Hill had been gone from home just two months when he again walked in at his front gate and up to the door. He was surprized at the quiet and apprehensive at the signs of neglect. The door was locked, but he had a key and opened it. Inside was that silent, clammy feeling of the unoccupied house, and tho he stopped to listen there was not a sound anywhere. He could not understand it and was entirely unprepared for the message that awaited him. He found Nellie's note on the dresser, and read, "I have taken the children and gone home

to my parents. You need not take the time to come, for I do not want to see you again."

At first Charles was stunned, and then hot anger filled his heart that his wife should play him such a trick. It looked unreasonable that she should take such a turn, for he had left her plenty of money. She knew he would return sometime. After a while he went to the home of one of the neighbors to see if they could give him more information in regard to his wife's movements, and there he learned of the child's sickness and death. There came to him then a sickening realization of his cruelty and neglect.

Leaving the home of his neighbor he went out to the cemetery and there by the side of a little new-made grave he wept out his sorrow and remorse, promising God that he would do all in his power to make amends to his faithful wife for all that he had made her suffer.

Back to his empty, deserted home he went, and every step he took, everywhere he turned, he saw evidences of his neglect and unfaithfulness. Now that his eyes were turned inward on himself, he saw what a heartless, selfish man he had been, how he had lived all for and to himself, forgetting the solemn marriage vows, forgetting his first love and care, and had cast on Nellie's shoulders all the responsibilities of parenthood. How hard he had made her life by his selfishness! How little right

he had to her affection! How just she had been in doing what she had done!

But Charles did not lose hope. He knew the faithfulness and loving tenderness of the woman he had married, and he believed he could win her back. At least he would do what he could. He would lay before her all the ardor of his first love, and he would not only give her love and companionship, but he would bestow upon her comforts and blessings that he could well afford with his income. He was ashamed of the poor little house Nellie had called home all these years. That night he visioned the new home he would build.

He feared to go to her with only promises; so at once he set builders to work on the house and grounds, and hurried the work with all speed. When he believed that everything was in progress to make his good intentions convincing, he went to the home of his wife's parents. With strange misgivings and a prayer for help on his lips he drew near, hoping that she would receive him.

Nellie was sitting on the porch, pale, listless, and sad, with her hands folded in her lap and her eyes fixed on the far-away horizon. His heart went out with pity and compassion, and with tenderness he spoke her name. She turned and saw him, and in another moment was sobbing out her sorrow on his bosom; and her heart was comforted with the knowledge that she was not appealing to him in vain, for his tears were mingled with hers.

She went with him to the new home and the new life. He had learned his lesson, tho at such great cost. He did not care to repeat the experience, tho he set a high valuation on the lessons learned.

He had found that a father's responsibility is more than being a bank from which the family can draw their funds, and that it takes more than food and clothes to hold a wife's affection.

NED'S LAST EVENING HOME

NED ALLEN brought his young wife to live with his mother's old friend, Mrs. Wellman, until they would get settled in the city.

"Jennie and I should like to live with you until I know how my job is going," he wrote, and Mrs. Wellman prepared some rooms in her ample cottage and took the young people in. For a month they ate at her table, and then the two began light housekeeping in the rooms she provided. They lived with Mrs. Wellman a whole year before taking a house for themselves. And in that year Jennie tried to copy her home life after the tranquil life of the mistress of the house.

Mrs. Wellman was first of all a Christian. She lived a godly, consistent life daily both in her private and more public life. All the outward forms of Christianity were kept up in the home, for Mrs. Wellman believed in letting her light shine constantly. Ned and Jennie were also professed Christians, but their home life during their childhood had not been patterned after the model of the Wellman home, and they thought little about keeping up the simple forms of Christian worship. Mrs. Wellman saw this while they were in her home, and she longed to help them to begin their own home right.

"Ned," she said one day at lunch when he and Jennie were alone with her, "will you return thanks today?" Ned flushed a little, looked embarrassed,

but bowing his head he said thanks humbly and sincerely and felt the better for it.

Mrs. Wellman said before the meal was ended, "Ned, you and Jennie both profess Christ, and you want to be genuine Christians. To do this you must give him the praise and gratitude that are his. It is a simple thing to thank him for the food you eat, and I hope that you will keep this form in your own home."

Ned promised at once that they would do so, and Jennie said enthusiastically, "Indeed we will, Mrs. Wellman."

Ned was out one evening and Jennie came in to sit with the Wellmans and was with them in evening prayer. Jennie enjoyed this little service, and she said, "I like your family worship, Mrs. Wellman." This was just the opportunity the older woman was watching for. She remembered the scripture which said, to let "the aged women . . . teach the young women," and she longed to teach Jennie to begin family worship in her new home.

"Jennie," she said kindly, "you love our simple service. Why do not you and Ned have your own worship morning and evening? You love the Lord, and why not give him a place in your home life from the start?"

Jennie was thoughtful for a little while, and then said, "I have been thinking about it, but I felt shy about beginning. I shall speak to Ned this very night."

The next morning she got the Bible as she had seen Mrs. Wellman do, Ned took it and read a scripture, the two of them knelt, and both offered a simple prayer. The day seemed sweeter to both of them for this good beginning in family life.

Five years later Ned and Jennie sat together at their own fireside in a distant city from the home of their old friend, Mrs. Wellman, and talked happily of the way their lives had been blessed. At bedtime Jennie rose in her usual manner and brought the Bible, and Ned read from its pages some of the kind and comforting promises. Then closing the book and laying it on a chair beside him he knelt with Jennie and again they both prayed earnestly to God, thanking him for past blessings and asking his care for the future.

Just as they rose from their knees the telephone rang, and Ned answering said, "Yes, yes certainly, I shall be right over." Turning from the telephone he said, "Jennie, there is trouble down at the electric plant, and I shall have to go at once. I may be gone several hours." And donning his cap he was off. A moment later Jennie heard the whir of his car as he started the motor, and in another moment he was on the street and away.

It was not more than a half hour till there was a knock at her door, and she rose from the fire where she had been sitting since Ned left, and answered. It was a messenger from the plant. The man stood helpless before her for an instant, and then bluntly

blurted out his message. A wire was down, and Ned had touched it—a wire of death. Her Ned was dead and even now was being borne away to the house of death.

She went with the messenger straight to the place where Ned now lay, and looked on his dear face, quiet and peaceful. Her heart seemed like stone until returning to her home she saw before the still blazing fire the chair with the Bible upon it, just where Ned's hands had laid it a few hours before. His last act in his home had been that of his usual evening devotion.

Dropping to her knees with her head on that Bible she cried, "O God, I am so thankful that Ned lived a Christian. I am so thankful we kept up our family devotions. He cannot come back to me, but I shall go to him."

A year later when she saw Mrs. Wellman she said, "I thank you next to God for teaching us to keep up our daily devotion. That is the best comfort I have now. I know that Ned loved and served God."

MRS. WHEELER ON FAMILY SECRETS

YES'M, most families have their secrets. I learn about many of them in workin' round in the homes as I do. I try to keep them to myself, which is one reason I am invited back to the same home week after week. I can't help wonderin' why some secrets are kept in the dark as they are. For instance, to confess that a father is a good, honest, hard-workin' man, with only money enough to keep his family and pay his honest debts, should be somethin' to be ashamed of, is more than I can see. I should think that would be something to bring out in the light and be made much of. So many folks that have money wouldn't have this honesty to boast about.

"But there are things that need to be kept secret I suppose. Like a cloudy past of husband or wife. But even then it often would make things better to bring them out in the open. The neighbors would see it wasn't nearly as bad as they had thought it was.

"Some things are not in the past, but father, or brother, or sister, has got into trouble with the law and is behind the bars. It is hard to confess that, and I do not blame folks for keepin' still. I would hate to think I had been guilty of ferretin' out a secret of that kind and airin' it 'round to the world. And when the trouble has been the fall of a husband

or a wife or a son or daughter, then it is harder yet. I admire folks that keep these secrets well locked up and hidden away and go on bearin' life the best they can.

"What gets me is dealin' with folks that *tell* secrets. Now the woman that stands around watchin' me work and tellin' me all the family troubles is a problem to me. If I tell her plain what I think of such doin' very likely I won't get to do her work any more, and I probably wouldn't teach her to keep her tongue, so I manage to bear it.

"She tells me confidential like that she has the meanest husband in town. Sometimes I think a husband couldn't possibly be as mean as a talkin' woman deserves. But then I was brought up different. My father was harder on talkin' too much away from home than on most anything else. He tried to keep things goin' so there was nothin' to be ashamed of, but yet he said he didn't like to have all the little faults and follies of home given out for the neighbors to chew over.

"One night my father gave brother John a lively limbin' for some misdeed of his, and Charlie told it at school next day. When Father heard about it he gave Charlie a harder one than John had got, with a promise of more with interest to any member of the family that told it off the place. We learned to keep our secrets to ourselves.

"I set it down as a fact every time that when a woman tells me how mean her man is and how hard

he makes life for her, she does not love him. I can't imagine a lovin' woman tellin' her man's faults. And no man that is a gentleman will tell his wife's faults away from home. I am a firm believer in family secrets remainin' family secrets, and never bein' brought out for public or private airin.'

"Yes'm, I believe that any woman with a lovin' heart can keep her family's secrets without it breakin' her down."

A WIFE'S VICTORY

SOMETIMES there comes to our hands the story of a battle bravely fought and won that cheers the heart. Such is found in the experience that we shall here give. The one who has had this experience we shall allow to tell it in her own words.

"When I was a child I was very fond of swimming, but it took me a whole summer to learn. We children would go out for a swim, and I would pretend I knew by swinging my arms and kicking the bottom of the river, but never venturing into deeper water. One day I ventured just out of my depth and was unable to touch bottom. Now I must swim or sink, and I threw myself upon the water and kicked, and, behold I swam!

"Years afterward I remembered this incident, for it resembled in some respects the experience I am going to relate. I had often said that I trusted the Lord, but I had never swung out into the deep things of God.

"I married a man to whom I gave a true wife's affection, but he was an infidel and cared nothing about my God and was not pleased to have me serving the Lord and reading his Word. We were the parents of several bright, pretty children whom we both loved, and who were dependent, as children always are, upon us two for home and happiness.

"We had a neighbor, a pretty, young creature, married, but full of the love of life and the pleasures

of the world. She liked to dance, to go to the movies, and to have plenty of young, lively company, and it seemed that my husband found much pleasure with her. He often spoke to me, contrasting her ways with mine and telling me how much he admired her. Of course I did not appreciate this, and I suffered and worried as only a loyal-hearted wife can. I bore in my breast this constant thorn for a long while, grieving, and wasting precious years in useless sorrow and trouble. While all these years I professed to trust God, yet I never carried this burden to him in desperate earnest. I bore it alone.

"Then came the time of test when I went beyond my depth and had to call on God for help. It seemed to me the attachment between my husband and the pretty neighbor girl became more pronounced, and my heart more sensitive.

"There came an evening when my husband wandered over across the way when her husband was away, and I knew my husband was aware of it. This was hard to bear, and it took all the grace and patience my soul had found in God. How bitterly I was tempted to foolish acts of jealousy! How the injustice of it all overpowered me! 'How can a man crush out all the joy from the heart he has wooed and won?' I asked myself.

"I think I understood that night how a woman can murder. But what was I to do?

" 'Perhaps,' said the tempter, 'you would be happier if you got a divorce.'

"This thought I considered candidly. I would be happier, I believe, and he would too, if we were divorced.

"But the children! Did we have a right to seek our own happiness when it meant that six helpless and innocent children would be thrust out into the world because of our broken home? For our happiness could we afford to have our children scattered among strangers? Taking away all question of affection, was it fair to take away all opportunity and happiness from six for the sake of two?

"What little I had left of my common-sense told me that I should be doing my children wrong to take such a course, and I concluded there on my knees (for I bowed in prayer), that divorce was not for people who had a family of children. There must be some other way.

"Then I prayed as I had never prayed before. I threw myself and all I had upon the fathomless love of God, and said, 'Father, not mine, but thy will be done.' It was there that I learned what it means really to trust God and leave all in his tender care, for I had come to the end of myself.

"Suddenly a great light flooded my soul, and seemed to fill the room. I felt my soul lifted out of a great darkness, and I was wonderfully happy. Rising from my knees I took down the Bible, for it seemed the Spirit was telling me to turn to its trusted pages and there I would find an answer to

my prayers. Yet this seemed almost unnecessary, so certain was I that my prayers had been heard.

"Nevertheless, I took the Book, and as if guided by an unseen hand opened to these verses: 'Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works. Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment. Live joyfully with thy wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labor which thou takest under the sun' (Eccl. 9:7-9).

"I had found what it really means to trust God, to forget my rights and to leave everything with him. Very glad and care-free I arose and began getting ready for bed. The children were all in Dreamland, and taking a lamp, I went to look upon them and see that they were safe for the night. As I looked on their sleeping faces, a deep thankfulness welled in my heart for all that had been given to me to work and to care for.

"It was while I was with them that I heard my husband's familiar step in the hall, and I felt much surprized that he was back so early. All feeling of hostility and injury was gone from my heart, and in their stead was a pity for the man who had been overtaken in a fault. There came a thought also that he had been permitted to do as he had done that I might learn how to trust God and that my faith

might come forth as gold. I could at that moment feel thankful even for the pain, since it had brought me this deep understanding of God and his love.

"I welcomed my husband home with a frank feeling of forgiveness in my heart, thankful for my own victory. Yet I was hardly prepared for the confession and acknowledgment that he made to me. 'I was tempted,' he said, 'to go there for the evening, and I went. But her husband had got there before me, and I heard them quarreling. It seems he was upbraiding her for going out to the movies with a young man he found there when he got home. They did not see me, and I did not make myself known, but turned and walked away. The rest of the evening I have been walking alone, and thinking things over soberly. I know that my own wife is the one for me, and the one I love, and I have come back to you. This other is to be put out of my life. My own wife is the best one in all the world for me.'

"In the happy days that followed it seemed that my cup of bliss was full, while heavenly joy filled my heart. It was blessed to know that my home was saved to me and my children. I am today a true Christian, for God has kept me all the way.

"But what if I had not got the victory, and had met my husband with an angry heart that night he came back to me? I might have upset all his good resolutions."

MRS. WHEELER'S SECOND MARRIAGE

THERE was Jake Payson, my first husband, as likely a man as you could find, and a good man in his home, but much as I loved him I never took the comfort with him that I did with my second husband.

"God knows I am not complainin' about Jake. He did not live quite two years after we were married, and we never got settled down to steady married life. I had ideas before I was married that I carried over, and it took all that time to rid me of them. The Jake I thought I was marryin' was such a man as never lived. He hadn't any faults, and possessed patience and understandin' that passed over all of mine. He was just the sort of a person I thought I needed in my life to make me perfectly happy. And it was a shock when I found that he had faults, blarin' ones too, and I learned that he saw the faults in me.

"We never actually quarreled, but there were times that he went off to work sullen and silent, and I stayed home and worked and cried and worried because he hadn't kissed me good-by. He would come in smilin' and pleasant and make it all up to me, but it took me days sometimes to get over the hurt of it. There were times I almost wished I hadn't married Jake, and I am sure he had the same kind

of thoughts about me. Then there were other times that life was mighty pleasant with me and Jake.

"One day a messenger came to the door and I knew by his face that something had happened. Finally he managed to say it, that my Jake had been hurt, and—, well that was mighty hard for me. Jake was still alive when I got there, and he took my hand and pressed it to his lips and whispered my name, and was gone.

"I had lots of time to think after Jake was gone. I looked over our married life and saw there wasn't anything the matter with it only we hadn't known how to live married. I shouldn't have expected a perfect man, and then when I found his faults I could have looked over them the same as I wanted him to look over mine. I came to the conclusion that if I could marry Jake over again most of those little troubles could be avoided.

"Then after a couple of years Andy Wheeler came into the neighborhood and we got acquainted. His wife died about the time my Jake was killed and we found comfort in tellin' each other about it. I told him how I felt about Jake and me if we could have had another chance. He had the same kind of thoughts about his wife. So we decided to try it again, together.

"I knew Andy had some faults, but I reckoned I had about as many. In the years that followed our marriage I took things calm like. When one of Andy's faults stood out plainly in front of me, I set

it down against just as blarin' a one of my own, and let them balance each other. I said to myself, 'I do not like that in Andy, but if he can put up with me, I surely ought to with him.'

"And there were times I saw him balancin' my faults with his, and he came off smilin' too.

"A woman when she gets tired and nervous with the wear and tear of raisin' a family shows a lot of raw edges on her disposition. Andy was plucky and never complained, and I'd have been ashamed to have complained against him.

"Andy's life and mine together was certainly comfortin'. I thought my heart broke when Jake went, but it was after Andy was taken that I learned what heart loneliness really is.

"I have to work hard to make my livin', and I see into the homes of a lot of young married folks. I have about come to the conclusion that most of them would be better off if they could learn the lesson I have learned.

"The trouble with marriages too often is that the wife goes on tryin' to idealize what is not ideal, and never gets settled down to common-sense livin' married."

CARRIE'S AWAKENING

CARRIE Thompson was a bonnie little country girl, growing up away from the sins and temptations that are rife in the world. She had a good, true heart, full of loyalty and courage. As other girls do, she looked forward to the time when the great adventure would come, bringing into her life love, home, and a husband of her own.

Carrie was not more than eighteen when she met Frank Barret. He was six years older than she, a good-looking, manly fellow, but an entire stranger to Carrie and her people. But little Carrie gave her heart away at once.

"I have something I think I ought to tell you before you make your promise," he said, "I have been married, and have a wife and five children. We were married when we were young, before we could know our own hearts, and we found it a mistake."

Carrie, looking up into his face, saw the pain pictured there, and she was filled with a deep desire to make up for him in happiness for all that he had suffered at the hands of this "other woman," who, of course, must be all to blame.

Frank had not explained the cause of the trouble that had broken up his home, and Carrie believed that his unwillingness to expose the sins of his children's mother made him quiet, so she asked no questions. At one other time he had opened the subject enough to explain to her that in granting the

divorce it had been stipulated that he should pay the mother of his children fifty dollars a month toward their support.

But Frank was receiving good wages, and Carrie, understanding little about the buying power of money, saw no reason why they should not have plenty after this amount was subtracted. She thought it noble of him to be willing to contribute to the support of one who had so injured his life.

Not one doubtful thought entered her mind about the man she was marrying, for she saw in him only the nobility that was a reflection of her own. The "other woman" and her children seemed a sort of dream, or myth, which need in no wise touch their lives nor mar their happiness. If she thought about them at all it was with a desire to make Frank so happy that he would forget what he had suffered.

The very first year of their married life brought unexpected expenses. Carrie was amazed to see how short a distance money went in paying those many bills that would accumulate in spite of her effort at economy. When fifty dollars was deducted from Frank's check she found it difficult to manage on what was left. They were running a little behind, besides having to feel cramped for money all the time. That other fifty dollars would make it much more easy and pleasant. It began to be a burden to Carrie to see that money sent away each pay-day. It hardly seemed fair that she who was giving her very life to make Frank happy should be skimped in

her housekeeping so that the woman who had brought only sorrow and injury to Frank should have such a large share of his monthly earnings.

Perhaps a little of her private feelings was communicated to Frank, for the monthly allowance to the other woman and her children was diminished considerably, with the explanation that the smaller check was the best that he could do. Carrie felt that Frank, in this, showed how much more she and his present home were to him than the old memory.

Her first year brought another wonderful joy to her life. No young mother ever looked into the face of her first-born with more pleasure than did she. And it was joy itself to see how Frank reveled in the love of his baby. She could not see far enough into his thoughts to know that he was trying to satisfy his starved heart on the love of this little one, when every day his very soul cried out for his other children, nor that the touch of her baby's hands brought back to him memories of the time that he had held his first-born in his arms. All of these things were hidden from her.

When little Alma, Carrie's baby, was one year old, Frank came home with a telegram in his hand and with a face all white and drawn and a look of anguish in his eyes.

"Little Billie has had an accident, and they think he will lose his eyes. I must go to him. And Carrie, he can have so much better medical attention here than there. May I bring him home with me?"

Carrie was a kind-hearted woman. She would have sacrificed her comfort for any suffering child, and how much more willing was she to give aid to a child who meant so much to Frank. She readily gave her consent, and he left with the intention of bringing Billie home if the mother would consent.

New and strange thoughts and feelings shook her while Frank was away, gone to the "other woman." That "other woman" had never seemed so real before, nor had seemed to lay so heavy on her heart.

Frank was back in a day or two, bringing with him little Billie and a sweet girl two years older to keep him company. And Billie was only four years old, nothing but a baby yet. He clung about Frank's neck calling him "papa," and Alice, a wise, motherly little girl of six, held Frank's hand and glanced up shyly into Carrie's face.

A lump raised in her throat as she looked at him and his children, for she saw that they were as dear to him as her own baby. She seemed suddenly out of his life, a thing unnecessary and superfluous. These were his children, and their mother was still living!

She made the children welcome and comfortable. They were quick to see and love the baby, but they could find no name for Carrie. Frank was "papa," but Carrie could not be "mama." "She," they called her for several days, and then Alice, noting that Carrie called herself "mother" to Alma, began calling her that also.

When Carrie unpacked their clothing she received a hard shock. She had a queer feeling when she began the task, remembering whose hands had packed them. But the little, worn, faded garments, the entire absence of pretty things, spoke of poverty. They had not been getting their whole check for months. Possibly food was as scarce in that other home as were clothes. "What have I done?" her heart cried out. "Come in and robbed a mother and her babies of their proper food and clothing. I wonder how she gets along, anyway."

Little Alice was always ready to talk with her, and Carrie learned many things about that other home as the days went by, things that made her heart sick with shame and remorse. The "other woman" was forced to do several washings a week in order to provide what she must have for herself and her children. She was often tired and nearly sick, but she had to work hard anyway. It took much for them all. Alice prattled on in her wise little way, telling things that tore at Carrie's heart.

The next morning after the children had come, Frank said, "Carrie, I wish you would write the children's mother and tell her how Billie stood the trip and how they are both feeling. She will be very anxious till she hears."

This letter was written, and in answer had come a letter written to Alice, which Carrie read to her. It was full of love and tender, motherly advice. It told how lonely she was without them and urged them to

be good children and give no bother. It was not at all the kind of a letter that the "other woman" that Carrie had been imagining would have written. The mother of Alice and Billie was a loving, thoughtful, true-hearted woman. Carrie remembered with a strange pang that if she had not been the children would not have been given to her.

Alice was always at the door to welcome her father and when Billie was able they both ran down the walk to meet him, and he would gather them into his arms with every expression of delight and love. It was evident that they were just as dear to him as Carrie's child. This did not make Carrie jealous. She was not that kind of a woman. But it did make her remorseful. When he so loved his children he should be with them. They had the same right, yes, five-fold the right to his love that Alma had.

How their lives were mixed up!

She learned that Billie was not the baby. There was another little boy who was not yet three. When Frank came courting her he had at home a baby that was not as old as Alma was now. Could anything happen that would send Frank out from her and her baby, making love to and winning another? If it had been possible for him to cast off Billie's mother and her baby, could she hope that he would be true to her through everything? What kind of a man had she married anyway, that could leave his own children and marry another while their mother was

living? It was her doubting of Frank that made her most miserable.

With her awakening to what she had done or had been a party in doing, came a desire to make amends as far as she could. If it were not for Alma she could go away, and after while he could divorce her, and perhaps go back where he belonged, with his children and their mother. But she had no right to rob Alma of a father. At least she could send the children home when they must go with all the pretty things that she could get together. (Carrie loved pretty things, and it was their absence in the children's clothing that had first startled her.) So she set to work sewing, skimping herself that she might send them back with plenty of good clothes.

The letters that came to Alice from her mother were a constant source of sorrow to Carrie. Not that they contained any reproach or complaint. It was the complete absence of these that hurt. At first there had been only a motherly anxiety in their absence and longing for their return. But when the weeks lengthened into months and yet the specialist would not release Billie from treatment, the mother became fearful that they were not intending to send the children back to her, and every letter was more insistent. At last they showed that she was nearly frantic. How different was her attitude from that of their father those two years he did not see them. All the idea that the children's mother had been to blame was banished from Carrie's mind, and

in its stead was a growing distrust of Frank's sincerity. All the joy, happiness, and hope was being swept away from her. What a terrible thing that divorce was beginning to be!

There were many things she wanted to know about the mother of Billie and Alice. Why had Frank cast her off? Why had he left his children? Who was to blame? She felt that she had a right to know the answer to these questions, and she broke the silence between herself and Frank on this subject and asked him to tell her. His answer was not satisfactory. They were very young when they were married, nothing but boy and girl. They thought they were in love, but as the cares of life came on, for they did come soon and heavy, they found that their love was not sufficient for the strain. It was impossible for Frank to give up all the pleasures of youth, and the mother of his children expected him to settle down like an old man. There were contentions and strife until they concluded to give the struggle up. Like children they decided not to play together any more. At least that was the impression Carrie received.

Frank brought no serious charge against the mother of his children. Because she, a girl of only a little more than twenty, could not bear the care and responsibility of five little ones without becoming fretful and peevish, he had cast her aside and left her to bear the burden alone. He had thought that he loved her!

Frank's explanation coupled with the prattle of little Alice brought a picture before her of that "other woman." Hands that were roughened with hard work; face that should have been young and pretty, seamed with toil and care; eyes that should have been full of light and love, heavy with weeping and sorrow and loneliness. If she, Carrie, should become worn and fretful, would she also be cast aside? Her talk with Frank did not help her any.

Little Billie was rapidly coming to perfect health again; not entirely perfect, for that could never be. One little bright eye was gone, but the other had been saved, and as nearly a perfect substitute as could be made placed for the absent one. There was soon to be no excuse why Alice and Billie should not return to their mother, and Carrie was hastening to have all those pretty things that she wished to send home with them. All day long she sewed for the children. She was just finishing a "frilly" little skirt for Alice, and when Frank came in she held it up for him to see. He glanced at it, but saw also that supper was not on the table. He was tired and hungry, and the day had not gone pleasantly for him, and he was in no mood to appreciate the pretty garment.

"Yes, it is pretty," he said absently, "but where is my supper? I am hungry. I had only a cold lunch since breakfast. You should have had it ready."

His indifference hurt her, and his curt tone (she did not know his trying day) cut deep. She had

been working for his child, and she thought it only just that he should show appreciation for her efforts. Up to this time, before all doubtful thoughts of him would enter her mind she would look for an excuse for his manner, but now anger and disgust raged in her bosom as she arose to set his supper on the table. Such had been the change that her awakening had brought to Carrie.

At last the day came for Billie and Alice to return to their mother. With keen delight Carrie packed the things she had made for them, thinking how pleased their mother would be with them. Their mother! How her heart ached for Billie's mother! How she longed to go to her and tell her how sorry she was, and help her bear her load! But how could she do that? She must remain the "other woman" to Billie's mother.

It was hard to give them up, they were such adorable children. That first evening after they were gone, Carrie took Alma in her lap and sat down in the little parlor just off the room where Alice and Billie had slept. Frank hesitated a moment, and then said, "Let us go on the porch."

"Why," she asked, "should we go there, for it is more pleasant here?"

"I cannot stand those empty beds," he answered with a sigh. Obediently she arose and went with him, and while he read his evening paper she pondered deeper and sadder thoughts than she had ever imagined.

"If Frank cares so much for his children, why did he leave them? What sort of a man is he anyway?" Then she mused on the joy of Billie's mother as she held Billie in her arms. Back came her thoughts to the lonely, restless man at her side. "How can two people love children as these two love theirs, and there be no love between the parents? If I were out of the way, perhaps—. But I am here, I and my baby."

"If, while her husband liveth, she be married to another,"—these words of Scripture rang in her mind. "And whoso marrieth her that is put away." What was her standing and Frank's before God? she wondered. What was to be done? What could be done? Was there any remedy? "I knew before I married him, and I am as guilty as he," she groaned in spirit.

In the morning she and Frank took up the course of their lives, where the going of little Billie and his sister left them. But Carrie could never feel the same. She had been awakened to the evil of divorce, but too late to keep her foot from the net. Like Billie's mother, she must make the best of it. Nothing she could do would help. A lifelong regret.

I wish this story could be brought to a happy ending, but it cannot be. They who break the laws of God must suffer. Carrie Barret was awake, but only to sorrow and regret. Frank had shirked one great responsibility in order to find happiness, and he found only ashes.

MY MOTHER'S MISSIONARY BOX

I DO NOT remember just the circumstances that prompted Mother to adopt the plan she did for gathering funds for the work of God, but I do recollect the first "Lord's treasury" that occupied its place on the cupboard shelf. It was a small wooden box with a top that slid back and forth. We children were given to understand from the first that anything that got into the box would be used for no other purpose than the work of God.

In those days the pennies and dimes were collected slowly indeed. We were a large family, and my father had suffered financial reverses, which, coupled with the dry seasons and general hard times, made it difficult to have any spare change. Mother believed that if we gave one-tenth to the Lord the other nine-tenths would go as far as the whole would have done otherwise; but Father was not at all sure of this, arguing that when a man in his circumstances took proper care of his family and helped any needy ones that came to his door he had done his part. He could not look with real favor upon my mother's habit of running to that box with every spare penny. Mother, on the other hand, was far from satisfied with the amount she was able to gather in, and she set herself to think out some way she might accumulate more. At last she had a plan formulated and brought it to Father for ratification, for without his consent her plan would be a failure.

"Papa," she said to him in her most persuasive way, "I am sure we ought to give more to the work of the Lord. I know we have little to give from, but we can do our part. I, at least, am willing to do my full part, and I have thought of a way. Now, I like coffee as well as you do, but I am going to give it up and not drink a bit, and I want that ten cents a week for the Lord's treasury. Ten cents is what my coffee has been costing us a week. Also, I do, with the children's help, all the work of caring for the chickens. I am planning to give one-tenth of my egg and chicken money to the work of the Lord. And I expect to do the same with any other poultry that I may raise. That will keep a little coming in every week, and sometimes I can get quite a bit."

You observe that Mother did not meekly ask, "May I do this?" but boldly announced that she intended to do it. Father knew that if he vetoed the proposition Mother would obey, but he found it very hard to bring any substantial arguments against her plan. He was not an overbearing man anyway; so he answered good naturedly, "All right, you are the doctor, I guess."

So began systematic giving in our family.

At first Mother missed her coffee, but not for a long time, for it really seemed that the blessing that came to her soul for this little sacrifice was far out of proportion to what she had done. She did not drink any substitute that cost her money to buy, but took her cup of hot water at meal-time almost

as she would perform a religious rite. She intended to be perfectly fair about what she did.

And the chickens seemed to stir themselves, and the first season it was wonderful to her how much money went into that box. Mother's eyes fairly danced when it came time for the chickens to be taken to market and she could drop whole dollars into the box. Turkey selling at Thanksgiving and Christmas was another time of rejoicing.

The giving of the funds was left to the needs as they came up. Wherever there was a call for means when she had some on hands, there it went. I think I never knew a time when there was a need that Mother did not have something with which to respond, tho never the great amount she wished she could give.

Other means of getting money into the box (for this became a sort of mania with her) presented themselves. One time some travelers stopped for a night's lodging. Father invited them in, found a place for them, and invited them to the family table. When they were ready to leave they offered to pay for their lodging and meals, but Father laughed and said, "I may be out on the road sometime, and I should like to be treated as a friend. You are welcome to the hospitality of our home, and let us say no more about it." The man, turning to my mother, said, "But we do not feel satisfied to let it go that way. We have been well-served, and we wish to pay for what we have received. You will accept this, will you not?" and he held out to her ample pay for

their lodging. Mother's heart jumped. Did she dare say it, the thing that was on her tongue? What would Father say? But the opportunity was too great to be lost.

"I shall not take it for myself, but I have a little box here that I am filling for the work of God, and if you wish to give it for that purpose, I shall be glad to accept it," she said.

She glanced over at Father as she spoke, and he made no objection; so the stranger handed Mother the money for the box. That gave Mother a new idea. Often they lodged persons this way, or had someone at their home for a meal. When they offered to pay Mother would tell them of her box, as she did this man, and accept their money.

The months slipped by and stretched into years, and the children grew and left home. Still the "Lord's treasury" stood on the middle shelf of the cupboard, and into it flowed the gatherings that Mother made for the work of God. I think she got more real pleasure and satisfaction from this one plan in her life than from any other thing, and she never lagged in following it up.

The little box wore out in time, but Mother found another one. I have no way of estimating how much she gave a year, for she kept no account, but I am sure the accumulation of years amounted to a comfortable sum.

As we children became older and able to make a little money in our own name we also found great

pleasure in slipping our tithe into the box and enjoying Mother's pleasure in finding more in the box than she thought was there.

An extra hard year came, and it was almost impossible for Father to get food for his stock. The horses, much to his sorrow, grew thin in the field, and he had not the grain to feed them properly. The cows had to depend on the pasture alone that spring, and the hogs got only the grain that was absolutely necessary to keep them from starving. Father worked early and late trying to have things better for the next year, and we all lived as economically as possible.

The chickens did fairly well, and the Lord's treasury was not forsaken.

The little pigs suffered most, I think, and many of them died. Mother went out one day and gathered seven that were growing very runty, made a little pen for them, and fed them milk regularly. Six of them grew and thrived, and in the fall were ready for the fattening pen.

"Papa," Mother said earnestly, "you would have lost all six of those pigs if I had not taken care of them. I am going to make a bargain with you. If you will take *my* six pigs and fatten them I will give you half of them for your trouble and your grain, but the other half are mine, and I shall give the best one to the work of God."

"All right," he said, "I guess that is fair enough."

Father watched the pigs and saw that one of those six was far outstripping the rest and would be the best pig he had for market that winter. He it was who named the pig "Gospel," and I think he took as much interest in it as any of us.

"See that pig," he would say to visitors, "that one which is larger than the rest? His name is Gospel. That is the reason he grows so well. He belongs to my wife and she is going to give him to gospel work when he is ready for sale."

"Your wife must be very forehanded to have the best pig on the place picked out," someone said.

"It is all right," Father answered soberly. "She has been at this thing of giving regularly for years, and I believe it pays." Then he explained how she had saved this pig from famine; so had a right to him.

The time came for Gospel to go to market, and he brought more than any of the rest. Both Father and Mother willingly put all his price in the Lord's bank, which by this time had grown to be a somewhat larger box than that first used.

Better years came, and the farm was more productive. Mother still kept watching for means to put in the Lord's treasury. She found a number of experiences like the following. A neighbor had sickness in the family and sent for Mother to come. It was not her custom to charge for her services, but often after she had nursed for a few days someone would give her something for her work. She

would always put half of such amounts into the Lord's bank. Father also became more interested and almost every year he dedicated a pig to the gospel work. Or if not a pig, some corner of the orchard, garden, or field. Once mother planted the dedicated ground to cotton and hoed and picked it herself, getting something this way for the Lord's work.

The neighbors became interested, and especially one old neighbor, tho an ungodly man, opened his purse and gave something to my mother, saying "Put that in the red pocket-book" (which had been brought into service when a box wore out).

Sometimes when the proceeds from the sale of the Lord's portion of the farming was more than she knew where was best just then to give it, she put it to work somewhere till she had a suitable place to which to give it.

I suppose when the Lord calls my mother home that the Lord's treasury, whatever it is then, box, or bottle, or purse, will contain something which she has just gathered for the work of God.

LITTLE CHILDREN

Shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart,
Bound together never to part;
Wee baby arms is the cable rope,
Binding with toil, and love, and hope:
Life has a meaning of wondrous worth,
When children circle the family hearth.



LORENA'S BABY

MRS. CASSODY took her rocker over to her side window so that she could look across to the little cottage next door. It seemed wonderful to her to have neighbors so close, and she never tired of watching pretty Lorena Carew as she flitted back and forth in her kitchen. Mrs. Cassody had lived in the white house many years and had seen the village grow to the dimensions of a city and her own street fill with new and smart cottages. One of them was actually in her dooryard. She could stand in her kitchen door and converse with Lorena from her side porch.

Mrs. Cassody had taken a lively interest in Ralph and Lorena from the day they moved in. Because they were young and their furniture all new their neighbors concluded they were bride and groom. But Lorena told Mrs. Cassody later that they had lived with her mother for six months after their marriage. They were beginning real housekeeping for the first, nevertheless.

This morning she saw that Lorena was crying. The pitiful droop of the girl's shoulders had first attracted her attention, and watching closely she was certain she saw Lorena wipe away tears. She had always felt a motherly interest in Lorena, and she could not bear to see her young neighbor in tears. So finding some pretext she went over and rapped on Lorena's door.

Lorena invited her in, and when Mrs. Cassody slipped her arm around the girl's waist she dropped her head to the older woman's shoulder and burst into tears afresh.

"What is the matter, Lorena? Can I help you?" she asked.

"Nobody can help me," said Lorena. "I shall have to bear it, I suppose, just as other folks do."

"Bear what? Your life ought to be happy, here in this pretty home, and with a man like Ralph to love you."

"Ralph does try to encourage me, telling me it is all right, but I cannot feel that way about it," said Lorena.

"What is troubling you so, Lorena?" asked Mrs. Cassody again.

"Haven't you guessed? I supposed you knew," said Lorena.

"I haven't been guessing anything. I know I have a dear little neighbor and wish she were my own daughter."

"I am going to have a baby," said Lorena, and burst into sobs again.

"You are! My, how wonderful! Your home will be perfect then. That is all it has lacked, a baby to love and tend."

"Do you honestly think that way?" asked Lorena in astonishment. "I thought I was disgraced. I have been ashamed. Ralph says it isn't anything to be ashamed of, but I couldn't see it."

"Lorena, whatever made you feel this way?" asked Mrs. Cassody in great surprize.

"Mother always talked that way. I have never told her. That was the reason we moved way over here, so I wouldn't have to tell yet. I know she will be mad," and again Lorena cried.

"Why Lorena, that is what God meant in married life. To marry and bring children into the world has always been the happy lot of women. For that we are fitted, and that brings us the greatest happiness. Nothing so beautiful nor so good could possibly happen to you as to be a mother."

"Ralph has always tried to comfort me, saying he wants children, but I could not be reconciled. It seemed to spoil everything."

"It is a misfortune, Lorena, when babies do not come to bless a home. You can fill your time and thoughts with other things for a few years, but the time will come that you long for children more than anything else. And having children will draw you and Ralph closer together, and give you something worth while to live for. It is God's way, the plan he made for our lives, and we are always happiest when we follow after God's ways. So be encouraged and look forward to baby's coming with a smile. Have you got ready for the coming of the little one?"

"No, I have done nothing. I did not know what to do, and I was ashamed to ask anyone. Oh, I have wanted to talk to you but I did not know how

to begin. I am glad you came over this morning, for I was too discouraged to go on any further.

"Then we shall begin this very day. Hurry round and get your work all done, and we shall go down town and begin our shopping. It will be almost like being young again to help you get ready," said the older woman eagerly. And Lorena caught some of her enthusiasm and smiled as she went at her kitchen work with new vigor.

Mrs. Cassody was with Lorena a great deal in the weeks that followed. They covenanted not to tell Lorena's mother till the very last. Ralph felt much more light of heart when he saw the help of their neighbor to Lorena. And in those weeks of close fellowship the older woman taught her young friend how to meet motherhood with a smile. When Lorena found that she dare look at it that way, she was happy in anticipation. At last she could hardly wait the time.

Afterwards, as the baby grew and blessed their home, both Ralph and Lorena understood better than ever the great kindness Mrs. Cassody had done them in teaching them the meaning and purpose of parenthood, and how to meet its responsibilities with hopefulness.

"AS A LITTLE CHILD"

IT BEGAN in the morning before the child was up. The mother had found some evidence of carelessness—afterward it looked insignificant—and going in immediately to call the child she took time to give her a sharp reproof for her neglect. The child had turned to greet the mother with the brightest of smiles, which faded with the reproof.

When the child washed her hands and face she wet the bottom of her sleeves, and dripped some water on the floor, and was reproved for that.

At the breakfast table she fidgeted about and spilled something on the table cloth, and when she was scolded for that she stuck out her lips in a pout and was sent away from the table.

When mother combed her hair for school she wiggled and whined under the operation until mother gave her a little slap to quiet her.

When it was time for her to dress for school she was determined to wear a different dress from that which her mother wanted her to wear, and she acted so naughty and spoke so saucily that her mother in desperation turned her across her knee and gave her a spanking. She left for school a few minutes afterward, flouncing out without a good-by kiss, and her face turned away from her mother. Mother watched her out of sight and then sat down and cried.

"What kind of a mother am I to have a morning like this? Surely if I knew how to manage I could have avoided some of this friction."

After this the whole morning was reviewed. Again she saw the sunny smile that had turned to greet her, and the cloud that had obscured it as she scolded her, and the merry chatter that had accompanied the washing act, which had given place to moody silence after she was reproved for mussing her clothes. The bright eyes and merry laugh at the table that had given place to frowns and pouts after the scolding about the spot of jam on the tablecloth next haunted the mother. She had been nervous and weary that morning, and she had pulled the child's hair. "I would have made a bigger fuss than did she if it had been my hair that was pulled," the mother confessed. And the trouble over the dress, was it not really the climax to all the other trouble? If things had gone smoothly till then would the child not have been willing to do as she was bidden? "I believe she would, and I am sure I am the one really to blame for the whole trouble. Oh, my child, my little child!" and the mother's tears flowed freely.

"What does she think of me? How will this affect her school work this morning? Will she feel as nervous and unstrung as I do? Oh, if I only had her here long enough to send her away with a smile!"

Thus the mother mused, and being a woman who knew and loved the Lord, she knelt and asked God

to give her more wisdom and grace for motherhood. But her whole morning was clouded, and it was with a feeling of dread that she looked forward to the coming of the child at noon. Could she make her understand?

She was at the window watching when the child came in sight, and there was no sign of drooping there. The child flung the curls back from her face as happy and care-free as ever her mother had seen her. Mother met her at the door and held out her arms to the little pilgrim. The child sprang forward and clasped her mother about the neck, saying, "O Mama, I have been thinking all the morning what a good mother you are. You are the best mother in the world," and she kissed her over and over. Hand in hand they walked into the house, and glancing up the child exclaimed, "Mother, why are you crying? Have I been naughty?"

"No, darling, no. Mother loves you very dearly," and she pressed the little hand more tenderly. Somehow she could not bring herself to cloud the child's happiness by so much as mentioning the morning's troubles. But deep in her heart a prayer went up to God, "O Lord, help me to be like a little child, to hold no malice, to forget my wrongs, to love in spite of the faults of my loved ones, to be as forgiving as this little child."

And the child hurried to the bowl to wash her face, and was careful of her clothes, and came to the table in the same merry mood. If she did have some

mishaps the mother forebore scolding, and with a bright word corrected the difficulty.

When the child was off again to school the mother mused, "How much unnecessary worrying I put in about the effect of my scolding upon her. Her merry little heart rose above it."

But as she thought further she promised herself to control the scolding habit better. She knew it was not right for her child to be punished because the mother had tender nerves. And most earnestly she prayed for wisdom to be a mother.

A PRAYER FOR MOTHERS

As a little child forgives,
  Forgetting the wrong that is done,
Holding no malice or spite,
  After the trial is gone,
    Would I forgive.

As a little child believes,
  With confidence tender and strong,
That Father knows all things,
  In all things never is wrong,
    Would I believe.

As a little child submits
  To him who bareth the rod,
Chastened, but lifted and loved;
  To thee, my all-wise God,
    Would I submit.

THE IMAGINATIVE CHILD

"MAMA," says little Johnnie, "a great big bear came out in our alley and I killed him with Papa's big gun."

The mother is unimaginative and cannot understand her child. To her a spade is always a spade, and a hoe a hoe. She never indulges in flights of thought, remaining always on the ground-level. To her this assertion of her little son is a lie, and she says reprovingly, "Why, Johnnie, you did not see a bear at all, and you have not had Papa's gun. All that is untrue."

"No it isn't, Mama, I did kill the bear. The gun went bang and he is all dead now," says the child ready to cry.

"Come and show Mama," says the mother reaching for his hand. Little Johnnie sees that Mother does not understand, and he cannot make her understand. He is due for punishment, and yet the dead bear is real to him. "A man came and hauled him away," he says between his sobs as they go out to the scene of his play.

The wise mother says, "What a fine play. You really killed a bear in your play." And little Johnnie, pleased that his mother understands, begs her to come and see, and going out he shows her just where he stood, and how the gun went "bang," and how the big bear fell. She agrees with him that it was a fine game. And no harm is done.

"Mama, we had such a fine time over at Edna's this morning," announces a little girl, "Edna's mother brought out a big cake, and we ate it all."

"You just played that she brought it out," the mother says.

"Oh, yes, we played that. Of course she did not bring out a really, truly cake," answers the child unaware that from a grown-up view she has told an untruth.

To a child his play-world is more real than his everyday life. He is unable to keep clear in his mind where truth ends and imagination begins. Understanding on the part of the parent will keep from unjustly judging the child, and will also help the child to learn the difference. When the mother hears her child telling an imaginative story, just a suggestion like this, "That was a fine game," or, "You had a nice play," will help to keep the two ideas clear in his mind.

Three little children were playing together. The oldest one was a child greatly lacking in imagination, as practical and common-place as a little old woman. Her little brother and sister on the other hand had lively imaginations. The three were in an old wagon-bed with a bit of canvass over them, but the two smaller ones were in an airplane on their way to Germany to rescue an uncle. They were excited with their play, and to them the experience was real. The other child said disgustedly, "It is not an airplane at all but the old wagon-bed."

"Mother, I had a lovely ride in the new bus," said a small boy when he came home to dinner at noon. "The man stopped at the schoolhouse and said, 'Jump in boys, and I will give you a ride.' We jumped in, and he hauled us down to the turn. It was fine." But that evening at supper the little fellow began to cry at the table. When his mother inquired concerning the trouble he said, "Mother, I never rode in the bus. I thought I did, but I didn't." He was old enough so that the two—imagination and truth, were partly straightened out, and he realized that he had been untruthful, a thing his mother abhorred.

Do not be unjust with the imaginations of the little child.

"I DO NOT BELIEVE YOU, MOTHER"

MOTHER, please let me go. We will get some fine fish for supper," begged a little boy as he stood beseechingly before his mother.

"But I am afraid to have you out in the boat with those boys. You might fall into the lake and be drowned," reasoned the mother.

"No I won't," contended the boy. "I will be careful as can be."

"But you are such a little boy, and you cannot swim. Tom and Joe are not good boys, and I cannot trust you with them that way," argued the mother. "You do not realize what it would mean for you to fall into the water. I do not want my little boy drowned."

"I won't get drowned," said the boy.

"But there is danger of your drowning," said the mother again.

"I do not believe you, Mother," said the boy insolently.

"Do not believe me! My child, when did I ever tell you an untruth that you should not believe me?" asked the mother in surprize.

"Many times," said the boy positively.

"When did I ever tell you an untruth?" she asked.

"When I was a little fellow you used to tell me there was a bogy-man in the other room and he would get me, but I went into the room and looked

everywhere and there wasn't any bogy-man. And you told me big bears lived in the sand-bank, and I mustn't go there. But I did go and hunted all over for the bears, and they were not there. You said if I told a lie the bad men would get me, but I did once, and a bad man never came at all. You are just trying to frighten me now."

The boy was not insolent now, but in earnest, pleading his cause. His mother knew not what to say next. She had been guilty of all the untruths he blamed her for, but she had never thought of them as lies. But now, when her child was wishing to do something that really brought him into danger, her word had no weight with him because he did not believe her. She felt sick and faint, but her child must be restrained. She positively forbade him, and saw that he did not slip away and go. She had a very unpleasant scene with him, and her sense of wrong made it hard for her to manage him.

The shock she had received by his words stayed with her. "What have I done? What am I to do?" she cried over and over. "My baby just coming to the years when he needs my guidance and counsel, and I have already lost my hold on him. God show me what to do," she cried over and over.

When little son was over his anger about his fishing trip, his mother took him and told him how sorry she was for what she had done, that she saw she had been very much in the wrong, but she had asked God to help her never again to tell him an

untruth. And she was careful from that time on to speak the truth, and that alone, in dealing with her son. She had come too near losing him to dare to trifle with his sense of truth again.

MARGARET'S CASE

MARGARET'S mother was suffering from what was proving to be a nervous breakdown, and she called in her family physician to consult him about her ailments. He was talking to her in his kind, fatherly way when the door was suddenly thrust open and a very angry and determined girl of six or seven entered the room.

"I want chocolates. Nurse says you have them. Give me some."

"Margaret, what a naughty way to enter the room! Here is Dr. Jones looking at you. What will he think of such a bad-mannered little girl?" said the mother flushing painfully.

"I want chocolates," said the girl hardly glancing at the doctor.

"No, Pet, not this morning. Remember you were ill last night. I brought the chocolates in here so you could not make Nurse get you some. They might make you sick.

"They won't make me sick. Give me some chocolates, I tell you," in a threatening manner.

Flushing more painfully the mother continued to remonstrate with the child mildly. "Baby, Baby, you are so spoiled! Mama thinks it is not best for you to have chocolates this morning. Go ask Nurse for an orange. There, that is a good girl."

"Give me chocolates. Give them to me or I will scream," and waiting an instant to see if her mother

would relent, Margaret suited her action to her threat, and, with a stamp of her foot, she uttered two or three shrill screams. Her mother rose to her feet and went to her saying, "Child, child, you make me so ashamed. Go back to the nursery at once." But more screams followed, and striking and stamping, the child held her ground, saying over and over, "Give me chocolates. Give me chocolates."

"Well, if you must have them, I suppose I might as well give in. This will cause me to be down sick if it keeps up."

So going to her bureau drawer Mother took out a box of rich chocolates and gave the child one.

"No, two. Give me two chocolates," and another storm was at hand. The mother obediently handed over the other chocolate, and the child left the room with almost an angelic smile.

"Margaret is so spoiled, and I hardly know what to do with her. She is such a determined child," said the mother to the doctor, apologetically.

The doctor was silent for a while. He was a conscientious man, and he had had this woman under his medical care for some time. He felt he should be honest with her even if he made her angry.

"Madam," he said quietly, "you called me in to diagnose your case. If when I came I found your little daughter ill with an affliction which I was certain would take her life or leave her a life-long cripple, would you consider it my duty to keep still until I was asked to speak in her behalf?"

"No, certainly not," answered the mother wonderingly.

"Then I hope that you will not be offended in what I have to say. Your child is spoiled indeed, and is taking a course that, if allowed to go to its natural end, will bring her to shame and you to dishonor. 'A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame,' says an old proverb, and it is true today. Your child is being robbed of her birthright of honor and usefulness, and you are the enemy who is doing it. In her present course she will never bring you anything but trouble and sorrow."

"Doctor," almost shouted the angry woman, "how can you call me an enemy to my own child? I would lay down my life for her; I would suffer any torture, give any possession. How unjust to make such prophecies of the little darling, and then say her own mother is the cause of them coming true."

"I know it sounds hard, but it is truth. Remember what I have told you, and see what the result of your training will be by the time she is twenty years old," said the doctor still more quietly.

"I asked you to come to give me aid for my nerves, but you have given me a terrible shock which can only do me harm. I never was spoken to in such a way in all my life," said Margaret's mother, on the verge of tears.

"I shall go now," said the doctor, "and if you want me tomorrow let me know; otherwise I shall not come."

Very coldly she let him go, too angry to speak. But she called him again the next day, and tho pale and weak in body from the sleepless night she had put in, she told him she had changed her mind, and had taken his advice, and by God's help she would take Margaret in hand lest his awful prophecy should come true.

Margaret was twelve years old when the doctor had opportunity again to observe her, for their paths had parted as paths will. But the Margaret of twelve was a quiet, orderly, obedient child, quite different from the young tyrant of seven. She had been saved through the doctor's frank diagnosis.

Her mother had also gained in nervous power, for there is nothing harder on a woman's nerves than having to contend with children like Margaret was at seven.

"THERE IS A TADPOLE"

HOW VERY tempting it is to say, "I told you so," when one who has failed to take our good advice finds himself in trouble. And how often we fail to score a victory over self and yield to that temptation.

A woman speaking on this very subject, told of an instance of her own childhood and showed the respect for her mother it created in her young heart because her mother was able to keep back those hateful words, "I told you so."

Freida was out in the orchard, and while playing about a small puddle there she saw in its waters certain little wiggling creatures which answered in her estimation to the description her teacher had given of tadpoles. The teacher had explained how tadpoles become frogs, losing their tails. She and cousin Billie had talked over what the teacher had said, and Billie had boasted of seeing real, live tadpoles. Here were tadpoles, many of them, in this puddle. Freida was consumed with a sudden desire to study frog life.

"Mother," she said, coming in excitedly, "there are tadpoles in a puddle out in the orchard. May I not bring some of them into the house and keep them in water and watch their tails come off?"

"Are you certain they are tadpoles?" asked her mother. "Maybe they are only wigglers. Tadpoles grow into frogs, but wigglers grow into mosquitos."

"Oh, I know they are tadpoles. Teacher explained how tadpoles look, and these are just like she said. May I, Mother?"

"Yes, if they are really tadpoles, you may. Bring some here in a bowl, and we shall see," answered her mother.

Freida brought the bowl of water with the little creatures in it, a half dozen or more, and the mother saw they were only wigglers.

"Freida, dear, those are wigglers, and they will grow into mosquitos. If I were you I would not bother with them," said her mother.

"No, Mama, they are tadpoles. I know they are. They are just exactly like what the teacher told us about. Please, I may keep them, may I not?" persisted the child. "I will keep them in my room."

"Very well, Freida, if you will keep your door shut. I fear you will find yourself mistaken," said her mother.

Freida hung over her bowl of tadpoles, watching them interestedly. She was disappointed that they did not change faster. One morning she went to the bowl and did not see a single tadpole, but just then she felt a sting on her arm from the bite of a mosquito. Mother was right.

Mother had shown interest in her experiment. She just then came into Freida's room. Seeing the little girl over the bowl, she said, "How are the tadpoles this morning, dear?"

Tears were brimming in Freida's eyes. She had been sure, and now her tadpoles were mean old mosquitos loose in her room.

"They are all gone," she said weakly.

Mother came over to the bowl and looked in carefully. "There is a tadpole, Freida. Look. Down at the bottom of the bowl. His legs are beginning to grow. Didn't you see him?"

And sure enough, there was the baby frog in the sediment at the bottom of the bowl. The mosquitos were killed, and the bowl was brought down where all the family could watch Freida's tadpole become a frog.

But best of all was Freida's respect for the mother who never said "I told you so," but saw only the one little tadpole.

DOING THE MOST IMPORTANT THING

I HAVE learned a wonderful secret which is an untold blessing to me in the busy days that make up my life, and I would pass it on to my equally busy sisters. A woman's life cannot be blocked off into days and hours, this time for this, and another time for that, with full success; for the many ends of her responsibilities overlap each other in a way that is confusing, four or five things coming up and demanding attention at the same time. No wonder a woman's nerves give way and her strength fails with the many demands put upon them.

But I have learned a wonderful secret that is helping me greatly to solve my problems, and I believe it will help others. It has to do with values, and consists in this—doing the most important things first.

There can be but one most important thing at any one time, no matter how many other things may clamor. It may be the hushing and quieting of a child, the preparing of a meal, the tidying of the house. At one certain hour of every day the bedtime story is the most important thing, and unfortunate is the child that is habitually sent off to bed without it.

There are times when the most important thing is writing a letter, or calling on a friend. There are half-hours that can be most profitably spent in

courting the husband and father of the children, keeping alive the coals of conjugal love and happiness. Reading of God's Word and secret prayer are most important things sometimes.

When the matter is faced squarely the most important thing can be chosen instantly, and that thing can be done with no worry about the rest. If they are really necessary they will come to be the important thing each in its turn.

When a nap and relaxation is the most important thing I go off and take my rest, no matter what is waiting for me. And when I rise from my rest the work seems to melt away, when it was hard to keep it going before.

Those who have learned this secret find that doing the most important thing with the assurance of heart that it is the thing that should be done, relieves the mind of the much anxiety and worry. There come days when much work must be left unfinished. It is so in every busy life. Yet the most important thing can be done each day.

I hear some worried mother exclaim, "If you had a home full of little children to care for, you could not cast things off so lightly."

I am not casting things off lightly. I am in dead earnest in my work and know well that there is more to do than I can ever get done. Yet I know that at any given moment there is but *one most important thing* to be done, and I want to recognize that thing and do it. The other fifty things can wait till their

turns come. If they are really important the moment will come when they are the most important.

I cannot do all my work by schedule, altho schedules help; nor can I get my work into such a system that I can know ahead just what I shall do, yet system helps. There are always things coming up that demand immediate attention. This upsetting of schedule and system was at first a great cause of confusion and worry. Now I have capped my system with the happy rule of doing the most important thing first, and it takes much of the friction out of life.

If you have never worked by this rule, try it and see its wonderful results.

THE MORNING MEAL

A Monolog

FOREVERMORE! When will those girls get down here? Jane Elizabeth, Mary Ellen, hurry for once in your lives. Your father called you before he went out to the chores. There is no need of taking all morning to dress. Here at last. I know you two girls are the slowest mortals I have ever had any dealings with.

"Jane Elizabeth, go to the cellar and bring this dish full of lard. Wash your hands first. What have I taught you? Will you never remember?

"Mary Ellen, go to that baby before he splits his throat.

"Jane Elizabeth, look what you are doing. There, you have dropped grease on the floor. There goes some more. Get that cloth there and wipe it up. This house will look as if it never had a keeper before night. Look, child, what you are doing, just spreading that around. There, you have a spot big as my hand. Oh, when will you learn to use a little caution! You just dash ahead without looking. Now do be careful.

"Mary Ellen, get those children dressed and stop all that noise.

"Andrew Rankins, what are you doing here with all that mud on your feet? Get out of here, you and your dog. Will you never learn to wipe your feet before you come in the house? You children

will run me distracted with your carelessness. But when you have worked me to death you will realize, maybe, how a mother ought to be treated.

"Jane, go to the milk-house and bring a pan of milk. Now, do be careful and don't spill any. Sweet milk is what I want.

"Mary, if you can ever get those children dressed, come out here and set this table. You are too trifling. You have been long enough about that to have dressed four instead of two.

"Jane Elizabeth Rankins, I told you to get sweet milk, and this is sour. Was there ever as careless or heedless a girl as you are? Take this back and bring a pan of sweet milk. No, I shall go myself and then I can have what I want. But you will burn that meat while I am gone. Hurry now.

"Mary Ellen, get that table ready at once. I have put up with your trifling as long as I can.

"Here, Jane, stir this gravy. Careful now that you do not slop any out on the stove. Pay attention to what you are doing.

"Mary Ellen, what are you doing, that you have not finished laying the table? I am ready to call your father.

"John, breakfast. Tell Andy to hurry so as not to keep things waiting.

"Mary Ellen, cut the bread. There, make those slices thinner. When will you learn to do that job neatly? Can't you do something to quiet that child. I am as tired now as if I had done a day's work. It

is certainly trying to depend on the help of growing girls. And I know you girls are more heedless than the average.

"Andrew, drive that dog out. You will have to get rid of him if you cannot keep him out of the house. And those cats. They are the most vexing things. I do not see why you have so many around.

"Get to the table, children. John, get things started. I shall be there in a little bit. I have to pour the coffee first. Andrew, be more mannerly at the table. Jane Elizabeth, wait on your baby brother. It seems to me you ought to notice something to do.

"John, have you fixed that fence so the cows will not get into the garden today? If I was a man I would keep things up so my wife wouldn't have so much running to do. But no one really thinks what a woman on the farm has to do.

"Andy, did you hoe those beans yesterday? You didn't? Well, you get at that first thing this morning.

"Watch that baby, Mary Ellen, see, he is getting gravy on the table cloth. There isn't one in this family that cares a thing about saving me work.

"John, you are as bad as any of the children. Look where you have dropped your coffee. All I say doesn't do one bit of good. They pay no more attention than if it was the wind blowing. I try to be patient. Sometimes I have a mind to give them a good scolding."

MARTHA CRAIG TELLS ONE SIDE OF A STORY

"YES," SAID Mrs. Martha Craig in her comfortable way, "it is a remarkable thing that happened, and I suppose I shall die wanting to know the other side of the story. I am plenty willing to tell you all I know, but I forewarn you that it will leave you curious the rest of your life to know the other half.

"It was the Saturday before Christmas, which I remember came on Wednesday that year, and I had been as busy as a beaver all day brightening the house and getting ready for the holidays, altho I was not expecting any guest especially. I thought maybe Joe and our son Nat would like a little Christmas fixings. They always do.

"Just about sundown there came a knock at the door and when I opened it a girl stood there wrapped in a pretty cloak, with furs about her neck and face, and her eyes and lips smiling up at me as innocently as those of a little child. I always wanted a daughter, and she looked just as I should like a daughter to look.

"I said, 'Come in, child, out of this snow,' " before I gave her time to say a word.

She came in and walked up to the stove and held out her hands to warm them for one minute. Then she said, 'Mis' Craig, will you let me board with you a couple of weeks? I am a lone girl in the city and

I have been directed to you.' Now I was surprized, for we never had kept boarders, and I did not know why she should be directed to us.

" 'Who directed you here?' I asked, curious like.

" 'A friend of yours and mine,' she answered, giving me another of those wonderful smiles. And I was won over.

" 'Well,' says I, 'we are not in the habit of keeping boarders, since our house is small. But we have a spare room, and if you like it I guess we could keep you for a couple of weeks.'

" 'Oh, thank you, Mis' Craig,' she said, tears coming into her eyes, 'I do not know what I should have done if you had refused.'

"I picked up her heavy suitcase and carried it to the room, and she followed. You should have heard the sigh of relief she gave when she got in and looked around. The room was pretty, if I must say it myself. I knew she felt right at home.

"An hour later she came to the kitchen to get a drink. She had on one of these loose dresses girls wear around the house sometimes, and I saw at once what I was up against. I suppose I looked my amazement, for she flushed and said, 'Mis' Craig, please come to my room for I want to talk with you.' I forgot to say that she told me her name was Lillian Norman and that she paid me in advance more than I asked her for the room.

"I went in feeling all weak in the knees and sort of sick all over. It was such a let down, for I

thought she must be an angel, she seemed so sweet and innocent. She sank down into the little rocker I always kept in the room and began to cry. My heart went out to her in her trouble, and I put my arm about her and said, 'Poor little lamb, tell me all about it.'

"It was an amazing story she told. She was a teacher over at Coopertown in the eastern part of the State, and she married last spring all unbeknownst to her folks and to the school board, and she and her husband had kept the marriage secret. He had got killed during the summer and she had no way to make her living but teaching, and so she never told that she was married, and took her place back in the fall. It seems the board would not hire married women. Well, here she was just ready for motherhood and wanting me to help her. She said she wanted to be able to go back and take up her school work by the time vacation was over, which would be two weeks from Monday. And I let her stay.

"The baby was born the next day, and two weeks from that day she left for Coopertown. She paid me well for nursing her and hired me to keep the baby till school would be out, paying me in advance for its keep till June. I was not to write to her at all unless the baby became very ill, as she wanted to run no chance of detection.

"People told me I was foolish, and that I had a baby on my hands, but I never worried, for I be-

lieved implicitly in Lillian Norman. She was such a lady, and I was glad to help her. Besides, the baby was a girl, and having the care of it from the first I loved it like my own. Faye, the mother had named the little thing, and as she grew we all saw she was named exactly right. She was such a beautiful little sprite that we all adored her.

"June came, and July came, and September came, and another Christmas came, yet I never had a word from Lillian Norman.

"Some advised us to turn Faye over to the authorities, but by this time Joe and Nat as well as myself all were slaves of little Faye, and we would not part with her for love nor money. We decided that she was ours, and ours she should remain.

"That spring we moved to the farm out in the western part of the State and lived there till Faye was past two. She was the cutest child I ever saw. But I saw long before that how hard she was going to be for me to manage. She was not our kind, too lively and smart. We are plain people, but she was everything else. I wondered how we would come out.

"It was in May after Faye was two in December that a letter came from Lillian Norman. She was married again, she said, and both she and her husband wanted Faye. She said she had kept track of me all the time and knew how well I had taken care of her baby. She wanted her now and would pay me well for all I had done for Faye. They would be in our town the first week in June and get the baby.

"Of course it was impudent, and she never took into account the way we had become attached to Faye. Joe and Nat were mad as hornets and said they would never give the baby up. But I felt different. I reasoned with them, and by the time her mother came they saw it was best to give Faye over.

"Well, Lillian came. She introduced the man with her as her husband. Both of them were frantic over the beauty of the child and seemed to be ready to love her to death. They paid me well for every day of care I had given and made us a rich present besides, and took their baby out to the car they came in, drove off, and were gone. We have never heard from them since."

Martha Craig sat a while waiting for her listener to ask the inevitable question, "Who was this Lillian Norman?"

"I do not know. I told you when I began that I only knew one side of the story. I never expect to know the other side. But this I do know, Lillian loved her baby and took the best way she knew to protect both the baby and herself. But still I am curious to know the other side."

BROTHERS

FLORENCE NORTON wanted children with a heart-hunger that was almost past endurance, but fate decreed that she should never be a mother. When she was convinced that motherhood was an impossibility she urged her husband that they adopt a boy to fill the place of son to them. Henry Norton was not unwilling to do this, for it had been almost as great a sorrow to him as to his wife that they were childless.

Word came to them, as word will in a country district, that a family in an adjoining county had suffered much bereavement and the children were left without father or mother. These motherless children appealed to the Nortons. That is the reason that they drove over to investigate.

When they saw little John Vance their hearts were drawn to him. John was only a baby less than two years old, with bright blue eyes and yellow curls, a pleasant, healthy little fellow, exactly such a child as Florence had pictured her son would be. He and the oldest child, a boy of fourteen, were all who were left of the children not located in new homes. And Timothy, the eldest boy, was devoted entirely to the little brother. His poor heart had been torn and bruised in the loss of his parents and torn again at each parting with brother or sister, and all his pent-up feelings were spent in loving this one little

brother. But the Nortons bore little John away with them to adopt him as their own son.

Florence Norton wanted their son to know no parents or home but themselves and what they could give, and reason told her that in their home community someone would tell their boy. So they sold everything and moved to a distant part of the State, breaking off all correspondence with their old friends. Little John was rechristened Philip Norton, and little John Vance was entirely forgotten.

But the best laid plans will sometimes fail to carry through.

One day Henry Norton called at the house of a near neighbor and there he saw the boy this neighbor family had taken to keep for the help he could be about the place. There was something very familiar about this boy, and like a shock it came to him that it was none other than Timothy Vance. And to prove that he was right, Henry heard the boy answer to the name of "Tim," and he perceived that the boy recognized him. What, oh, what would Florence do now? It was with fear and trembling that he told her, and he understood the look of fear that came into her eyes. What if she wanted to uproot them again and fly away with little Philip?

But Florence had a plan. She went directly to Timothy and plead her case, stating in glowing colors the things she wished to do for Philip, and threatening to leave for more distant localities if Timothy would not promise to keep her secret.

Timothy, his poor, loyal heart aching to hold his little brother to his bosom, promised to let the secret be untold as long as Florence Norton lived, and Timothy Vance was a boy who would keep his word.

There sprang up a warm friendship between the boy at Ridley's and little Philip Norton. Philip loved Timothy as he loved no other person, going to him with all his childish troubles and relying on his advice completely. It was Timothy who taught him to fish and to fly kites, and to do all the things that boys love to do. It was Timothy who carried him to school on rainy, muddy days, and who was his champion among the boys at school. And Timothy watched over him to guard him from the temptations and pitfalls that are set for the feet of small boys. Florence Norton never knew how much she owed to Timothy, nor the indignities that he put up with in the Ridley home in order to be near Philip, and she was often more than half jealous of the love her little son gave to the awkward, homely Timothy.

When Philip was fifteen Timothy fell sick with typhoid fever, and for days he lingered between life and death. Florence went over to help nurse him, but she forbade Philip to go lest he should contract the disease. At last there was no hope, and it seemed that faithful, simple-hearted Timothy must pass out into the other world.

Not till all hope was given up did the seriousness of what they were doing come home to Florence.

Henry had hinted more than once in the years past, and more strongly since Timothy was ill, that they were doing the boys a great injustice, but she could never bear to see the look in Philip's eyes when he knew that she was not his mother.

But could she let Tim die without granting him the dearest wish of his heart, to call Philip brother? And if Philip ever knew, would he forgive her for letting his brother die unrecognized as brother? Her sense of justice was too strong to be resisted any longer, so that evening she told Philip that Timothy was his brother.

Philip had come in red eyed from weeping over his sick friend, and he listened in incredulous amazement to his mother's confession. He made no comment, but got up and took his cap.

"Philip, O Philip, what are you going to do?" Florence cried in alarm.

"I am going to my brother," he said firmly, and left the house on a run which never slackened till he was at the door of Timothy's room. Unseeing and unhearing to all else he went straight to Timothy's bed, where the older boy lay apparently dying, and kneeling there he said, "Timothy, my brother, I have come; your brother Philip has come."

And Timothy roused and looked at him and smiled, and shortly dropped into a natural sleep that brought health and healing to his fever-racked body.

Philip could not be persuaded to leave Timothy's bedside, and as "Tim" grew stronger he told Philip all about their old home and their father and mother, and his reason for keeping the secret all these years. He plead with Philip to forgive the wrong that had been done them and to be kind to the Nortons and repay them for all they had done for him, and little by little he softened the hardness that froze Philip's heart toward his adopted parents.

Only a mother can know what Florence Norton suffered in those days that Philip remained away from her with his brother, and how she regretted the deception she had practised so long. She believed her child was gone from her forever. But one day he came home and to her side and put his arms about her and kissed her. There, with her head on his young shoulder she wept out her sorrow and her remorse and obtained his forgiveness. To herself she took all the blame, explaining to Philip how his father had pleaded for frankness from the first. But she had not the heart to ask Philip to come home and be as he had been before. She knew he would remain with his brother.

It was Henry who made the suggestion. Let Timothy come with Philip, and they should have two sons. And thus it was arranged. As soon as Timothy was strong enough they brought him home, him and his brother Philip.

MRS. WHEELER, ON HOME TYRANTS

YES'M the Kaiser was a real tyrant, from what I heard said about him. But he isn't the only tyrant that ever was in the world. I meet'em every week in my workin' round in the homes of the people. Not that they bother me over much. A woman in my line of work is reasonably independent.

"But I see things. Now there is the father of one family I know who is high lord over all in his home. The little mother and all the children are afraid to cross him, and even tryin' hard as they will to be pleasin' to him he will become peeved now and then and act worse than a spoiled baby, rantin' round and makin' things disagreeable.

"One place I work the grandmother is the tyrant, and another place the mother seems to be. But mostly it is the children. Why there are children in this town that begin to run their homes before they are a year old, and keep it up as long as they are there, screamin', kickin', fightin', demandin' what they want, and gettin' it. 'Give it to me, or I shall sc'eam,' one little girl says, and all the family from gran'father down hustle round to get it for her. In another home lives a high-school boy who ordered his mother not to invite a certain old friend of hers to her home any more because 'she is such a cad when I have my chums in,' and that mother obeyed him. Think of it!

"About the worst tyrant I have ever found is a girl who is not very strong and really thinks she is an invalid. She spends a lot of her time watchin' herself to see if she can't find a new symptom. So many things she can't stand. For instance, her two little brothers went fishin' one day and actually caught a few little fish. Two prouder lads you never saw than they were when they brought them in to their mother, wantin' them cooked for their supper. Their mother said, 'Boys, you know how Betty is about the smell of fish. She can't stand it at all, and I hardly know how to manage.' 'Aw Ma,' they said, 'just this once. She can stay in her room. We will gladly carry her supper up to her. Please, just this once. We caught them ourselves, Ma, please do cook them.'

"But just then Betty called down stairs, 'Ma, do not let them fry that fish, for it will make me sick. They never have a thought but for themselves or they would not ask it.'

"And that settled it. The boys had to throw their fish away because Betty thought she didn't like the smell. Now if it had been my boys, and my daughter, I should have said, 'Betty, shut your doors and windows and get your camphor bottle and prepare to stand it the best you can, for these fish are goin' to be cooked and put on the supper table.' I am thinkin' Betty would have lived through it and perhaps been a mite wiser by the time it was over.

"Yes'm, there are tyrants besides the Kaiser."

THEIR MISTAKE

THE Sunday School Association had appointed a committee to investigate the extent and influence of rural Sunday-schools in its territory, and to encourage and promote the organization of Sunday-schools in neglected localities.

James Rankin was one of this committee, and to him was given the survey of the territory. He was to go into the communities, get acquainted with the people, and learn where and how to lay hold of the problem of Sunday-school organization.

Mr. Rankin was out on one of these surveys, rambling over the hills and across the valleys in his valiant little car. Evening was coming on and he must find a place for the night. He could easily have driven on to the next town, but such did not suit his purpose as did lodging with someone in the valley. He had found that eating at their tables, and then sitting with them after meals for a comfortable chat, was the best way to get at the things he wished to talk about.

Off to the left of the road he was jogging along, snuggled a pretty farm home against the side of the hill. Trees and shrubbery almost hid the house, but where it did show through, its clean white walls formed a pleasing contrast to the green background. The place looked altogether inviting to the traveler, so he turned in there. The householder sat on the porch waiting a call to his evening meal, and came

out to the car when Mr. Rankin stopped. He gave ready consent to keep the traveler over night and went with him to put his car in a shed for the night.

As soon as Mr. Rankin could make himself ready the supper call was made, and all the family came in to the table. It was a long table, filled with good things of the farm, and surrounded with healthy boys and girls of different ages. The father bowed his head with his family and reverently asked God's blessing on the food and thanked him for it and all other blessings. Mr. Rankin perceived that he was in a Christian home, and he thought, "Here is just the man I want to talk to. He will understand my theme."

After supper Mr. Rankin and his host went out to seats on the lawn and began the talk the Sunday-school man sought.

"How does the Sunday-school question stand in your community?" began Mr. Rankin.

"At zero. We have tried a few times, but it seems impossible to stir an interest in religious subjects here," answered the farmer.

"Have you no church services whatsoever?" inquired Mr. Rankin.

"No, there is a territory in here twenty miles across that has neither Sunday-school nor regular church services. Occasionally someone stops and preaches a sermon or two in the schoolhouse, but no constructive work has been done since we have been in the community, and that is nearly twenty years."

"Do you find that this lack of religious tone affects the moral and social life of the people?" continued Mr. Rankin.

"Greatly. The dance and horse-race are the standard social gatherings of the whole region. These gatherings are enlivened too often by the presence of strong drink, and with that, vile language, quarreling, fighting, and sometimes worse things. The moral tone is low. Many homes have one or two illegitimate children, and many more of our young people marry to hide their shame. All this would be different if they had the purifying influence of religious teaching."

"Associating with young people of low standards is hard on the children of Christian parents," said Mr. Rankin.

"Indeed it is. My wife and I did not realize how it would be. We thought we could influence our children in the home so that outside conditions would have little weight. But we found we could not. Young people seek their own associates. They must get out with their friends, and if their friends are the rough sort, they will be too. To our knowledge we are the only family in this whole community that is trying to keep a Christian home. And we are failing with our children. The older ones are already slipping.

"When we were married we did not have much money, and learned that land could be had cheaply in this valley, so came over and bought, altho we

knew the reputation it carried. We have worked hard, and have been able to get a good home and comfortable surroundings. So far as the financial side is concerned we have done very well. But we begin to see we have made a great mistake in thinking we can rear our family the way we want it reared and give our children no opportunity for Sunday-school and church. In a few more years our boys and girls will be settling for life, and they will settle right here and be a part of this godless community. We cannot bear the thought.

"Mother and I have talked it over, and we have decided to sell, tho it must be at a great loss, and take our children and flee out of Sodom. It is the only way to save them. And altho we shall be compelled to begin over again in another place, we have decided to go to where there is a good country Sunday-school and get a home as near it as possible, and there finish rearing our family. It was a great mistake we made, thinking we could rear our children right in the midst of ungodly companions."

"You have given me one of the best arguments for the rural Sunday-school I have ever found," said Mr. Rankin.

"I say, get religious influence for your children or get out," answered the farmer grimly.

MRS. WHEELER ON NERVES AND NAPS

YES'M, nerves are terrible things. I see a great deal of them in my workin' round in homes as I do. You would be surprized to know how many women have them.

"Now there is the woman who lives in that big yellow brick on the Avenue. She has very bad nerves. Her husband and children hardly have an evening home or a meal eaten in peace on the account of them. Something will be said or done that contraries her or makes her think about herself, and then she goes all to nerves and makes things unpleasant. I feel sorry for her, for she does feel bad, but she could have it a great deal better for herself and her family if she practised control. It isn't necessary to let nerves make a crank out of a wife and mother.

"I often think of our neighbor. She is a little German woman, and not very strong. Her family is large—I do not just remember how many there are. But through it all she manages things and keeps the home nice and the children clean and tidy. The meals are ready when her man comes from work, and everything goes on smoothly. I asked her one day how she managed it, and she said in her broken way, 'I alvays takes a nap. Right after dinner I takes the baby, vich ever von is the baby, and goes in my room and shuts the door and takes a sleep. Ven I

vake I feel all vell and happy and like I vant to work.

"I have been tellin' other mothers about this, and when they have tried it they find it does help.

"Once I got a case of nerves. We had sickness in the family and I was up nights quite a while and my work got behind. When the strain was over I made myself believe that I had to work doubly hard to get everything caught up. So I worked early and late, tired as I was, and got worse and worse. I jawed the children and almost quarreled with their father. I had spells of thinkin' I had about the hardest time of anybody on our street, and that I wasn't gettin' proper help and encouragement at home. Things were gettin' dark for me and mine, and I do not know what might have happened if I hadn't sort of come to myself and realized that I was codlin' my nerves and makin' them the excuse for a lot of damage I was doin' myself by not takin' time to rest as I should.

"I turned over a new leaf right off, and to the surprize of all the family I began sleepin' a little later of a mornin', gettin' up just in time to get their breakfast instead of spendin' an hour workin' before they got up. I went to bed earlier too, not leavin' the patchin' and darnin' till after supper. Then I lay down every day right after dinner and took a little nap. Why in no time I had lost my nerves, and the family was behavin' like they ought, and my trouble was over.

"Nerves do not bother much if a woman takes the rest she needs."

THE CHILD I REALLY KNEW

WHATEVER put the idea into the child's mind? What makes her do so?" And I sigh as if the child mind is something beyond my ability to comprehend. Then my thoughts fly back to the only child I have ever really known, and I try to remember the way she thought and felt.

There was the time when she stood only as high as her mother's knee. In the little prairie home the floor was made of very rough and knotty boards, and through one knot-hole that little girl could see the ground underneath the floor. She was consumed with curiosity to know if the out-of-doors really did reach under the house, and how far it was to it. So almost a whole set of knives and forks were dropped down that hole before her mother knew what was happening.

The mother did not understand that the child was measuring distance, and she felt very bad about her knives and forks. They were hard to get, and the loss was felt.

She dealt sternly with that little girl, not realizing that had she gone outside and got a stick and helped her to measure the depth she would have relieved the child of a great curiosity and forestalled any more loss. The little girl was spanked, and the hole covered over with a bit of tin, and a curious spot left unanswered in the child mind.

Perhaps some of the naughtiness of my child is

only the working out of an active mind. Do I really try to see what she is trying to do?

That child I knew grew older, and a certain serious thing she did not tell her mother. She had her reasons that I am yet bound to respect for not telling her mother, yet it was a thing that should have been told. She heard her mother say she knew her little daughter never kept anything from her, and then the child got up and left the room because her conscience hurt. I know exactly how that child felt.

Possibly it is the same way with my child, grown now a little older, when she does not tell me all that should be told. At least remembering the deception of that other child makes me feel more a comrade to my erring child.

And there was the time that other child forgot to cover a jar of sweet pickles, and a mouse fell in. Mother took that carelessness very hard and made a sad day for the child. I remember yet how sorry and ashamed that child felt, and how she promised her own heart never to be careless again; but she was. That child never meant to be naughty—she forgot. But when my child is careless how much I feel as Mother felt.

That other child I knew grew till she was in her teens. She was thoughtless and rude sometimes. There was the time she laughed rather boisterously in a crowd, and her old school-teacher reproved her. How well I remember the two feelings that contended for the rule of her feelings then, one shame that she

should have needed the reproof, and the other vexation toward the one who gave it. How do I know the warrings that go on in the heart of my adolescent daughter, when she is alternately rude and gentle, hateful and kind, impudent and respectful?

My child just coming into womanhood carries secrets in her heart that only the understanding heart and hand can find. I know she does even if I only now and then catch glimpses of them, for that teen-age girl I knew made me acquainted with my own daughter's problems and sorrows and joys. It is strange that I had so nearly forgotten. Ah yes, if I take time to go back I can know quite well the workings of my child's mind from the experiences that other child had.

I look out on the world of parenthood around me and wonder how many of these busy, tempted, harassed fathers and mothers try to understand their children through the child each one of them once intimately knew.

Boyhood and girlhood have not changed. We have changed, and we can remember if we will, and remembering know how to be more patient and long-suffering, yes, and firm and insistent, with these boys and girls that are ours today.

CLEORA'S PURSE

I SAT busily writing one Monday morning. My little daughter, a child of seven, came into the room prepared for school. Evidently she had something on her mind, some very important request. That was made plain by the twist of her small body, and the very persuasive smile on her sweet young face.

"Mother, did you notice that beautiful purse that Marguerite had at church yesterday?" she asked. I had noticed it, for Cleora held it nearly all through the service.

"I think it is the most beautiful purse I ever saw. It is just the right size for a little girl. Mother, I want a purse like that," she said eagerly.

"That was a nice little purse, and I suspect it cost a dollar," I said with a little warning in my voice.

"Mother, you always like to get me things that make me happy, and a purse like that will make me more happy than anything I could have. A dollar isn't much, Mother, and I want it so much," she pleaded.

"La, la," I said to myself, "a dollar isn't much! You shall learn, my little girl, how much a dollar is."

"I cannot buy you a purse at once," I said thoughtfully, "but I tell you what I will do. I will make a plan that gives you certain things to do each day, and every day you do them without being told I

will give you a penny, not for pay but as a reward for being thoughtful. And on Saturday, if you have got a penny every day since the Saturday before, I will give you a dime as a reward for being thoughtful for a whole week. But each day that you forget to do your work you must give me a penny, and on Saturday you will not get your dime."

"Oh, you dear, dear mother! I knew you would let me have my purse. I have three pennies already, and I shall soon have a dollar. I want my new purse to wear with my new dress next Sunday," said the happy child.

"No, child, do not expect to have your purse by Sunday. But on Saturday we shall go down and find the purse you wish and price it, so that you know just what you are working for," I said encouragingly.

That was in April. In August she came to me saying, "Mother, I have decided not to buy a purse. A dollar seems to be such a lot of money. If I may have my money I can buy something else with it."

"No, dear," I said quietly, "I am sure you want a purse as much as ever you did, only you are tired of working for it. Let us go on and finish what we have begun. The purse will seem all the nicer when you get it."

It was a sunny day in October when there were one hundred brown pennies in the little box she kept them in, and we could go down and buy the purse. "What a lot of money a dollar is!" she said wonder-

ingly as she looked at her treasured store. Oh, the toil of earning that money. Many the day that something was forgotten, and she had grudgingly gone to the little store and brought me a penny forfeit, and too few the Saturdays when a bright silver dime went into the box. But the dollar was at last all there.

I shall never forget the look of triumph with which she carried off her precious purse, nor the pride with which she exhibited it to her friends with the boast, "It cost a whole dollar, and I earned it myself," with perhaps the added remark, "A dollar is a lot of money."

Never did I hear her say again that a dollar was not much, and from that time forward we could talk sensibly together about the prices of things we wished to buy. She learned early how much a dollar is.

CLEORA'S ALLOWANCE

IT WAS on Saturday before Cleora's eighth birthday. We were doing our regular Saturday work together, for altho we were boarding and had only two rooms to take care of, and no other house work to do, I had given her a portion that was her responsibility, to give her a little practise in thoughtfulness.

On the wall was her tally-sheet, by which we kept account of her faithfulness, or perchance unfaithfulness, in remembering her small duties. Every day that a red mark went down to her credit she received a penny, which was tucked away in the purse she had bought with her first dollar. If she got seven pennies that week, on Saturday she received a dime as a special prize. But every day that she forgot to do her part and had to be prompted she went to her store of pennies and brought one to me as forfeit. I am sorry to say that few were the weeks that were rewarded with a dime, and some weeks only two or three pennies were saved to her credit. But occasionally she would take a new hold on herself, and get seventeen cents for her week's thoughtfulness.

"Cleora," I said, "did you ever hear of an allowance?"

"No," she said, "what is it?"

"It is a sum of money given regularly to be used in a certain way," I answered. "When you are a big girl I want to give you enough every week so that

you can buy all the clothes you need with it. But if you learn how to spend your money right, you must begin with a smaller amount. I think when a girl is eight years old she is big enough to begin having an allowance. Would you like to have me begin to give you something every week to help buy your clothes and other things?"

"Oh, yes, I do like to have money," she said eagerly.

"We shall begin today, because it is very close to your birthday, and I shall give you a dime, and each Saturday after this you will get a dime," I began.

"Even if I do forget to do my part?" she asked in surprize.

"Yes, no matter what comes or goes, you get your dime. But it is not the dime you are trying to get by remembering. If you are careful you may have two dimes every Saturday," I continued. I saw she was figuring, and waited so that I could have her undivided attention.

"If I am real careful I can have twenty-seven cents every week," she said at last. "What a lot of money that will be."

"Or you can be careless, and give nearly the whole amount to me," I said with a laugh. "Now listen to our plan. I will give you this dime, but it is not to spend for candy and such things, but to help buy some of your things. I believe you can get your stockings and hair-ribbons out of that and still have a little to use otherwise."

"You bought me three new pairs of stockings and some new ribbons just the other day," she said.

"Yes, I wanted you to have time to get started saving," I said. "You had better talk with me about everything you buy, so that we can plan together and I can help you use your dime best. First of all, you must give an offering to the Lord out of your money every week. You must never forget that, any more than you want me to forget to give you your dime."

So our bargain was begun.

"Mother," said Cleora one day several weeks later," we had pictures taken at school today, and I ordered three. They will be ten cents apiece. I counted and made sure I would have enough money to get them. You do not care, do you?"

"No, that is perfectly all right. Only be careful that you do not order more than you will have money to pay for," I said.

Springtime was on us, and many people were out with their kodaks. Cleora had been invited on a hiking excursion, and several pictures were taken, all of which seemed very wonderful and exciting to her. When she came home she informed me that she had ordered twenty cents' worth of these little kodak pictures.

"But I fear you are getting your funds too low. Remember you have to have a new pair of stockings before the last day of school. Can you make it?" I said.

"Yes, I counted closely. I have a dime and four pennies ahead now, and I shall get my allowance next Saturday. I can pay for the pictures, and have my penny for Sunday-school, and three pennies left. It is three weeks till the last day, and I shall get three dimes, and I am sure I can make something by keeping my work up. I am sure I can make it," she said.

"Well, if you are counting as closely as that, I suppose it will be all right. But it will put you close. You cannot buy one more thing till after you get your stockings. And our rule—no borrowing, remember," I said.

Two weeks later a little girl came to me with her face very grave. "Mother, I have to have more money. I forgot Papa's birthday, and I must get him something. It would be awful to have his birthday go by and not give him one thing. What can I do? May I not take part of my stocking money and buy him a card or something, and then you can get my stockings and I shall pay you just as soon as I can. Mother, I have to do it," and tears of earnest pleading were on her cheeks.

"Cleora, there is no use in your having an allowance if you can overrun it and come and borrow. I am giving this to you to teach you to live within your means."

"But, Mother," and the tears were rolling now, "I must give Papa a present."

"I think that picture of you and your schoolmates, where you show so plainly, will please him more than

anything you could give, if you really must have something," I suggested.

"But I want that one for myself," she said.

"Well, I do not know what you can do, then," I answered, "only that you cannot borrow, and that stocking money must be saved."

She left me sobbing as she went. I wanted to call her back, but I had talked to her a great deal about buying till she ran her allowance money so closely, and she would not listen, so she must learn by experience. An hour later she came back saying she had decided to give her father the picture I had suggested, and she added, "I have learned something about running my allowance so closely."

The stockings were bought on a very close margin, and when we got home from buying them she said, "I must look ahead and not spend my money closely like that. I do not like to skimp as I have lately. I should not have bought so many pictures."

"Cleora," I said, "that is the secret of spending money properly, looking ahead, and considering if we can afford the things we think we want. It is for you to learn those lessons that I give you this allowance and have you buy your stockings. You will need a new ribbon before long. So you better be putting money to one side for that."

"I will," she said, "I do not want to be caught in a trap like this again."

I said to myself when she went out, "I hope she really is getting the lesson now. I have seen women

keeping house who never learned to plan and look ahead, but bought what they wanted at the time whether they could afford it or not."

ADOLESCENT CHILDREN

Oh, the troubled waters rolling high,
Filling the boat and clouding the sky;
Hands on the oars with doubled power,
Lest storms overcome in an evil hour.
Bringing these boys and girls to port
Is work indeed of a careful sort;
Filled with worry and cares and fears.
Getting them past the turbulent years.



A CRISIS PASSED

THE BOYS were just entering their teens. Their parents had always provided them with plenty of material for boyish pursuits and up till this time they had been contented to play about the yard or in their father's barn when not in school, and had not seemed to care particularly for the company of other boys.

But now all was changed; things at home did not please them, and they cared for nothing but to be off with the other boys of the neighborhood. At first the parents felt no alarm when the boys requested to go out and play with their friends in the evening, for they thought it good for them to be with other children. But as these requests became more and more frequent and the boys stayed out a little later each time, the father sounded the alarm.

"Wife," he said, "I do not like the idea of small boys such as ours playing out after dark, as they are learning to do. I hear there are some rather rough and rowdish tricks being played, and how can we be certain that our boys are not in the wrong-doing so long as we let them run with the crowd that is doing it? I have given my consent for the last time for them to be out after dark. I am glad for them to play with the other boys in the day-time, but when darkness comes on our boys must be at home."

The next evening the boys came with their usual request to go out and play a while. The father re-

fused them, but gave them a full explanation for his refusal. How rebellious the boys were, and how they sulked around all the evening, moping about, too angry to do anything else. At an early hour they went off to bed, feeling badly abused.

The next evening was almost as bad.

By the third evening the father had provided himself with a new game he had heard the boys mention, and when the shades of evening began to settle over them he brought this out and proposed that they all work at it together. The boys became interested and it added spice to their fun to have their father play with them. When bed-time came it was the father who said, "I believe I can beat in the first game tomorrow evening." The boys took this for a challenge, and they could hardly wait to begin the game.

When the interest in this particular game began to wane another was bought. Weeks passed and every evening of the time was given to playing of games, the father with the boys. It was a sacrifice on his part. He would much rather have been at his reading, but his boys needed him.

When they did not seem quite so interested in games some good reading was substituted, reading they could all do together. So the evenings were passed.

Sometimes the mother made candy and popped corn, or in some other homely fashion the family played together. Four or five months of this sort of work went on, real work on the parents' part, but

they accomplished their purpose. Their boys were back into a normal home life again, thinking little about running out at night. The crisis was passed, and the home life made secure.

It is up to the parents of restless boys and girls to make home so interesting and pleasant that its enticement is greater than that which comes from the outside, if these boys and girls are to be kept under home influence willingly.

THE BOYS' ROOM

MRS. SMITH had a room for her boys. It was the one just off the kitchen, and the bed in it was the ugliest, most uncomfortable one in the house. There were no curtains at the windows. She hung curtains once, but she found them tied in knots to put them out of the boys' way, and she never tried to put any up again.

There was no closet in this room, and the boys' clothing hung around on the walls in a very untidy way, making regular dust-catchers. There was an old bureau in the room, which had no mirror, and the varnish was almost all rubbed off. The boys never thought of putting their clothes in the drawers, but left things lying round just as they had occasion to use them.

There was no carpet on the floor, but in winter a small rug was laid in front of the bed for the boys to stand on to dress.

This room, being just off the kitchen, was handy for many things. The dirty clothes basket was put there, and a sack of apples or potatoes, as they were being used in the kitchen. When Mrs. Smith was making quilts the frames were stacked in one corner of the boys' room to be out of the way. Also, when for any reason there was a box or bundle that must lie around somewhere for a few days, it was shoved into that room.

The boys did not care. They took not one bit of interest in their room, and it was a handy place to put things out of sight. Mrs. Smith was always careful to keep the door shut when they had company, for it was such an old plunder room. She often remarked that it was queer the boys never took any interest in their room. If they would take an interest she would fix it up for them, she said, but as it was she had no heart to do anything.

Now, the Smith boys' sister, Eunice, had a pretty room just off the parlor. It had a good-looking bed, white curtains, a pretty dresser, beautiful pictures, and an easy chair. Eunice thought a great deal of her room, and she was always glad to take her friends in to see it. But if the boys ever showed one mite of interest in their room their mother never knew it.

Mrs. Brown had a room for her son. She believed that boys should have things just as good as girls, and she arranged this room just as she would like to have had her room when she was a girl. There was a fine carpet on the floor, dainty curtains at the windows, a good dresser kept in careful neatness, two or three comfortable chairs, a white spread on the bed, and a bookcase with good books in the corner. But her boy never stayed in it and took no more interest in the room than did the Smith boys in theirs. They slept in their room, and he slept in his, and that is as far as it went with either.

Nor could Mrs. Brown get her boy to try to keep the room tidy. She had to go up every day and make it neat. He never took his boy friends to this room, but Mrs. Brown was glad of that. He began it a little at first, but she discouraged the idea. Boys are so rough that she feared they might break or spoil something. Mrs. Brown said it was really discouraging to try to have anything good for a boy, for he took very little interest in it.

Mrs. Gray had a room for her boys also. She and the boys planned it together, and she put in just the furniture they wanted. There was a bed sturdy enough to stand the strain of scuffling across it, if such occurred, yet it looked pretty good. The bedding and coverlets were strong enough to stand the use boys will give, and the top cover was dark-colored so as not to show dirt too easily. The chairs were also strong, so that there was no danger of broken backs or rungs if they should be tipped over. The floor was finished in a manner that would stand the tread of boyish feet: they did not want a carpet. There were a few more articles of furniture, but not enough to take up too much space.

The boys had very many things to bring to their room, queer stones, unusual specimens of insects, feathers, leaves, and the like; kites in the making; balls, bats, gloves, anything boys like to have in a room. Even living specimens, frogs, a young rabbit, a crippled bird, a big worm in the act of making a cocoon, found their way to this sanctuary.

THE BOYS' ROOM

The Gray boys loved their room, and they liked to take their boy friends there. Never did they have company but that there was something of interest to show them in their room. And the boys who visited liked it, too. This was a great puzzle to Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Brown. They often said that while their boys rejoiced to have an opportunity of visiting the Gray boys' room, they took no interest in their own. The remarks of Mrs. Smith's boys will show us how they felt: "Say, this is some room," they exclaimed. "Ours is a regular junk-shop." When they first saw the Brown boys' room, and the only time they ever saw it, one of them said, "Whew, sissy, my, how fine!"

Boys do like a room of their own, when they can have such a luxury. They do not want a "junk-shop," neither do they want a "girl's room." They want a room after a boy's own heart, where he can unbend himself and feel at ease. There must be nothing so fine it might be spoiled, nor so fragile that it might break, nor so tender it might tear, nor so polished that it might get scratched, neither so homely that they will be ashamed of it.

Give the boys a chance and they will let you know the kind of a room they want.

DRESSING ELIZABETH

"ISN'T it hard to dress a growing girl these days?" remarked Mrs. Elias Jenkins, as she sat a while to chat with Aunt Lucinda. "You do not know much about it, tho. Boys are not hard to dress, as are girls. Mrs. Cain says she is having a time with her Ruth, and my Flossie is giving me a hard time."

"I suspect girls are much like they have always been," laughed Aunt Lucinda, "and I am learning a little about their problems since I am dressing Elizabeth. She is Sister Jane's girl. Sister Jane lives over at Platt Center. She visits me sometimes, and you have seen her."

"Tell me about her and what you are learning, and maybe it will help me with Flossie," pleaded Mrs. Jenkins.

"Jane has her hands full and hasn't time to study her children to know why each queer little notion gets into their heads. I have always taken an interest in her and her children because she needed some help, with all she has to do, and I think I have almost envied her brood of little ones. Even when they were tiny things I began taking them garments made or to make, thinking it might be a help to Jane and Andrew. I enjoyed it too, for the children are mostly girls.

"When Elizabeth, the eldest one, was not more than nine, Jane began complaining about her being hard to sew for and very dissatisfied with her clothes.

She always seemed to like what I brought her, and I thought Jane was over sensitive as to the girl's moods. Sometimes I think mothers look at their children's little faults with a magnifying glass and worry when there is no need. I did not take it seriously about Elizabeth's whims, till she was about twelve. That summer I took a good wool dress of mine that I had worn several years and made it over for Elizabeth to wear to school the next fall. I thought so then, and I think so yet, that I made her a good dress, becoming and pretty. But all the time I was making it I was aware that Elizabeth did not like it very well. When I had it done and tried it on her the last time before I hung it away, there was a real pout on her lips and a feeling of dissatisfaction such as I had not experienced from any child.

"Well, she never wore that dress. Jane said she would have had a real struggle with her to make her put it on, and she just let it go from week to week, and finally gave the dress to a more deserving child who appreciated it.

"The next summer Jane wrote me to get Elizabeth a pretty gingham for Sunday wear before I came down, as she was too busy to go to town to get it. 'I couldn't please her,' Jane said, 'and she will not say what she wants.' I bought the dress and then remembered that I had heard Elizabeth say that she did not like yellows, and that was the predominating color in that dress. It was a beauty, but

I laid it aside and bought her as pretty a dress as I could find with no yellow in it.

"When I took it to her, Elizabeth, in a lifeless sort of way, said it was pretty, but she would not plan with me at all about the making of it. 'Just any way, Auntie, for I am not hard to suit,' she would say, and I could get nothing more out of her. Jane told me she was just the same way when they took her to town to get her hat, or shoes, or anything. She would not express a like or dislike, nor would she take any interest in the things Jane picked for her.

"That fall Jane wrote me that she had given up trying to make anything that Elizabeth would wear. 'I nearly worked my head off to get a new dress made for an entertainment, and then almost had to whip her to get her to wear it. She wanted to wear a middy and skirt that were outgrown instead. I told her then that I had made her last garment. I have my hands full with the others, and if she is going to be so queer, I shall just let her make her own clothes, except those with which you can help her,' Jane said, and I could feel that her soul was severely tried with the child.

"I felt dreadful about it, for I knew Elizabeth was totally without experience in sewing and would make a botch of anything she would try. That winter I bought and made two dresses and sent them to her, using the very best taste I had.

"The next summer I did not venture much but house-dresses, and Jane bought her a white dress. I was surprized to observe how well Elizabeth made her own clothes, but they did not please Jane at all.

" 'I like these plain colors so much better than plaids," Elizabeth said to me, when I commended the dresses she had bought and made.

"The next summer, when Elizabeth was fifteen, I was a little short of funds, as most people were, and not wanting to get her much better things than the rest had, I was perplexed to know what to do. But I bought her the most beautiful gingham dress I could find. It was a beauty, and there was no mistake about that. I just *knew* it would please her, and it was with almost childlike anticipation that I gave it to her.

"She looked it over, and her face said, 'Oh, dear, do I have to wear that?' while her lips smiled and said, 'Thank you Auntie, it is very pretty.'

"I knew then a little of Jane's trials. Like a child, I felt disappointed and hurt. I had counted much on her liking it. 'I am done,' I told Jane, 'and have bought the last dress for Elizabeth that I shall ever buy. I shall do as much for her as the rest, but I buy her no more clothes.'

"The next day I was talking with Elizabeth about the making of her clothes, and she would not say how she wanted one thing made. Jane had bought her a pretty dress, too, but she did not like it, and was dissatisfied and sullen.

" 'I wish I could have what I want just once. I never get what I like,' she said pettishly when I pressed her.

"I thought that was a time when the little girl needed a sharp admonition, for I knew how carefully and almost prayerfully I had chosen that dress, and Jane was as disappointed as I was over the dress she had got for her.

" 'Elizabeth,' I said, 'it is certainly ungrateful of you to speak that way when your mother and I have strained ourselves trying to get you something neat.'

" 'O Auntie,' she cried, 'I do like the dresses you got me. Oh, there is no use. I cannot make anyone understand,' and she went off and had a cry, and the rest of the day she wore an abused look that was very unpleasant for all of us."

"Now what is to be done with girls when they get unreasonable like that?" asked Mrs. Jenkins. "My Flossie is just as hard to please, only she is forever telling what she wants, and her notions are not twice alike. If I begin a dress she will have it changed half a dozen times before I get it finished. Sometimes I think she is hopeless."

"Well, that was the problem that I set about to solve," said Aunt Lucinda soberly. "If there is anything that worries me it is to see a child's disposition ruined by pouting and fretting, and I longed to know how to help Elizabeth out of her difficulty, for she is a fine girl, with the best of principles. I saw that she had one point right at least—none of us

knew what ailed her. It came to me that possibly Elizabeth longed to express her own individuality in her clothes, and I wished that she might have a chance to do so. I did not see how it could come about, for Jane's household has to count every penny, and I could not take over the whole responsibility of dressing the child. One thing was clear to me, and that was that Elizabeth's disposition was being hopelessly ruined by the constant friction over her clothes.

"That fall before school began Elizabeth was sent to me with instructions to do what I thought was best in getting her clothes for the winter. I took the child and sat down quietly, and said, 'Elizabeth, your father has sent me money and asked that we get your winter clothes and make them while you are here. Now, let us talk it over and see what you want.'

"At once her face took on that 'just-as-you-please' look, and she said, 'Just get what you think best, Auntie, and it will be all right.'

" 'No,' I said firmly, 'I said last summer that I would never buy you another dress till I knew just what you wanted, and I will not. You tell me exactly what you want or I buy nothing.'

" 'Auntie, do you really mean that I may have exactly what I want in my winter's clothing?' she said incredulously.

" 'Yes,' I answered, 'that is just what I mean.'

"She began at that and told me just what she

wanted, how she wanted it made, how much goods at such a width it would take, what she wanted in trimming, and the yards of trimming needed, down to the last button and snap. She had her whole wardrobe thought out. Color and fabric both were stipulated, and the matching shades of trimming were most carefully planned. I wonder yet at the hours of meditation and careful figuring with due respect to her father's pocket-book the child had done to get it all down as she had it.

"I figured as she talked and saw that the outfit would be as inexpensive as it was sensible, and there would be no reason why, in the main, it could not be granted. So our shopping tours began. Sometimes it was a little hard to find just what she wanted, but no substitute would do, and when my sense of the fitness of things caused me to suggest something 'as near like it as possible,' I felt her stiffen in the old way.

"We made several trips, the last one for shoes. I could not understand the kind she meant and thought some sensible shoes on sale would do, but she never saw them. At last we found the desired kind, and she was soon fitted with everything just as she wanted it. Neither you nor I could have planned a more sensible wardrobe for a high-school girl. I felt proud of her, while at the same time a warm admonition itched on my tongue. Now was the time to talk after I had bought her all she wanted.

"All her reserve was gone then, and we talked frankly. She told me all about her struggles for the right to express herself. 'I hated plaids and bright colors from the time I can remember, and loved plain, soft colors,' she said, 'and it seemed that the bright plaids were what I got.' I remembered that the beautiful ginghams I had taken her each time had been of those bright, enticing plaids one sees on the counters. 'When I tried to tell what I wanted no one seemed to understand, so I said nothing and just endured it,' she continued. I remembered how we had thought her sullen and ungrateful when she was only trying to hold her peace.

"Then I had my say. 'Elizabeth,' I said, 'I am only too glad you have the clothes you want this time, and they are sensible, too.' I remembered as I spoke the pretty things we had culled over for her in order to pick her extremely plain colors, and mused at our difference in taste.

" 'But there is another side of the question. You cannot always get just what you want, and it seems to me you ought to try to master your passion for having your own way exactly in your clothes. You make it hard for others. All girls of your age are selfish in one way or another. Many of them are thinking of gaity and good times, with never a thought of the anxiety they are causing. Other girls are cross and hateful. Your selfishness has shown in your particular ideas in dress. You think your father and mother have been cross to you, when

they have been eager to please you, if they had only understood. Remember this and put out of your mind the thought that you are always being purposely crossed and thwarted. You put us all where we are afraid to try to please you. If you do not bring this trait into control it will master you and make your whole life miserable.'

"She slipped her arm around me, and said, 'Auntie, I will try to make myself different, if I can.' "

"Do you think every girl should be allowed to dress just as she pleases?" asked Mrs. Jenkins.

"Only a few have a passion for self-expression as Elizabeth has. Most of them only want to express the latest fad. But when a girl is like Elizabeth she should have that strain off her mind that comes by being crossed on this line. I am glad Elizabeth has what she wants this winter."

VERNA'S ROOM

VERNA stood in the midst of the sacred enclosure of her room, in deep thought. Would she dare to do it? Why should she not? Mother had given her the room for her own, and did that not mean that she could do with it as she pleased? But what would Mother say? Would she understand?

At last the girl set to work and rearranged the furniture, which was in itself pretty, but had been arranged far too stiffly to suit the taste of her young mind. When she had the room to her liking she looked at it with shining eyes. The dainty curtains, the white bed, the soft rugs, the easy chair, the handsome dressing-table—everything was lovely; and the whole setting, to her mind, beautiful.

She did not tell her mother what she had done, but she found out her mother's mind in a very trying manner a few hours later. Verna had been out, and when she came back to her room she found it put back to its old, stiff way. Her mother was yet in the room, and she looked at Verna with reproachful eyes. "Why did you pull everything about in that way?" she asked. "Leave it now as I have placed it. It looks much tidier."

Verna made no answer, for her seventeen years of training under her keen-eyed mother had taught her that it was useless to expostulate. But her heart sank. Her room became suddenly common-place

and dull. It was not then to be "her room"—just the room where she slept.

In the coming weeks she tried once or twice more to arrange the room to her own taste, but she met with the same experience. Her mother was trying to teach her taste and order, and would not allow her to have things as she liked them.

After that Verna took no interest in her room. It was the same way with the housework and everything else about the home. Verna was listless and inattentive. All her interest, seemingly, was on things outside the home.

Again and again Verna's mother chided her for her ingratitude and told her she was unthankful and unappreciative. She was especially hurt that Verna cared nothing about the room she had prepared for her so lovingly. After one of these talks, Verna, who was a young Christian and wanted to do right, would stir herself and try to fulfil her mother's ideal. But she could not. Her room was a sample of her results at any attempt at self-expression, and Verna had too strong a personality to be happy unexpressed.

From the garret to the cellar their home expressed her mother. Every picture, every curtain, the arrangement everywhere, was as her mother wanted it, and for some reason, contrary to all of Verna's ideas of taste and beauty.

And in Verna's clothes, also, the same strict adherence to the mother's ideals was held. The mother always bought her daughter's clothes, or

superintended the buying, so that colors and styles were had that were proper, according to the mother's point of view. And to have no chance even in this way to express her own tastes was a cruel bondage to the girl.

If these mothers who are so full of self-expression, and who love to dominate others, could understand that their daughters get a portion of that nature also by inheritance, and recognizing this give those daughters also a chance at self-expression, much warfare in the domestic circle would be avoided. Verna's problem is a hard one indeed when the mother in her strong-willed way will not give in. Verna's mother did not relent. She believed she could mold Verna in her mold if she was firm enough, so she held to her purpose of requiring the taste that was pleasing to herself.

Verna did not take any interest in home, much to her mother's grief and disappointment, and as she grew older this tendency to be attracted out of the home grew upon the girl. For a while the conflict was hard, for Verna's mother contended with her, expostulating and reasoning, pleading duty and filial loyalty. But Verna could not bring herself to be what her mother had planned for her to be.

At last, when the girl had finished high-school, and had taken a short college course, she abruptly left home to make her own way in the world. And when she was at last free from the tyranny of her mother's opinions she became happy and satisfied

with life. People wondered why a girl with a home like Verna's should choose to live in rented rooms and put up with the inconveniences often found in such a life. Verna was too loyal to tell her reasons, but they were very definitely fixed in her own consciousness.

She had to leave home or smother.

Verna's mother never understood this, but carried to the end of her life a feeling of injured innocence because her daughter had taken a course that seemed to reflect upon the happiness of her home, when her mother had given her life to the one purpose of bringing up Verna to a perfect and happy womanhood. "Mothers are not properly appreciated," she said to herself many times.

WHY JOHN RAN AWAY

NIGHT was falling at the end of a pleasant autumn day, and the farmer and his wife were just returning from the city. Their small son sat on the gate-post waiting for them, with news that was fairly bursting his young heart to keep. Sister was in the kitchen weeping, and if it were not for the excitement in his own little brain the small boy would have been crying too.

"Papa, John has run away," he shouted before the horses had come to a full stop. "He never went to school today at all, and his dinner-bucket is in the kitchen. Tom says John went before dinner, that he saw John going out across the fields."

"Hush, child, do not say such things about your brother," the father chided, trying to stop the thumping in his own breast. He got out and helped his wife to the ground, and she went directly to the house, her brain in a whirl. She was a composed woman and she made no outcry, but the blow had gone deep. Yet she hoped that there was a mistake.

She spoke reassuringly to the weeping girl, and then went directly to John's room, half expecting to find him there. John's room was in good condition, just as her boy had always kept it. He had been a good son to her. But the tell-tale signs were there, and she knew that John had departed suddenly. Tears controled till then wet her cheeks, but she

bravely returned to the kitchen to prepare supper, for the other children must have their meal.

John's father came in, his shoulders drooping in a way hitherto unknown to him. "Mama, I am afraid it is true. While all the morning chores are done just as I told him to do them, nothing has been done this evening. Have you been to his room? One could make sure by the signs there."

The father went on to John's room to assure himself, and because he stayed some time his wife went in to find him. He was standing by the window. Stepping to his side she softly touched his arm, pity and sympathy in every move.

"I cannot understand John," the father said. "He has been such a good boy, and absolutely trustworthy, till just lately. He has been careless a few times recently, and I have had to scold him. I scolded him soundly last night. He was careless and he knew it. But that was not enough to make him leave home."

"You will try to find him and bring him home, and then we can talk it over and see what has made him take such a notion," pleaded the mother.

"No," said John's father enphatically, "I shall not bring him home, nor even try to find him. He is not a boy who will get into bad company, and I want him either to succeed or find out that he cannot take care of himself. If I bring him home he will be running away again the first time anything goes wrong. Oh, I trusted that boy," and the pain in

that father's heart overcame him. Covering his face with his hands he wept. If John could only have looked in then!

A year passed by and no word had come from John. Often his father sat sadly thinking of him, for John was such a fine boy. But he kept his vow not to search for him nor to try to bring him home.

Before the second year was up John came home, but not repenting. He met his father as one man meets another. He had taken care of himself and made money, and he had fulfilled his father's prophecy and kept out of bad company. He knew his record was clear as he looked into the steady blue eyes of his father. There was a perfect understanding between them after one heart-to-heart talk.

Do you wish to know why John ran away?

First, his father taught him to. The father left home and did for himself after his fourteenth birthday. John had often heard the story, and his father's boasts, "I wanted to take care of myself; I knew I could make my own living. And I would not be bossed by anyone. When my father and my brothers undertook to order me about, I left, and I have got on very well." John had the idea that it showed strength and manhood to be independent and self-reliant to the extent of getting out and taking care of himself.

Second, John was fourteen, but in stature and conduct he was like a boy of seventeen. He had done as much work that summer as the hired man,

but had received only a little spending-money. It was the father's lament after the boy had gone that he had to go out like a beggar. While the boy had been well cared for, the man within him longed for money to handle as his own earnings. A financial understanding between him and his father would have removed this obstacle.

Third, he was pricked to the quick by the sharp reproof of his father. He could not stand to be bossed. He wanted to be treated as the young man that he was. Here he was face to face with the common grievance of children of his age, and this dissatisfaction added to the other two brought him to his hasty decision.

A little better understanding of boy-nature would easily have kept John at home and prevented those weary months of anxiety. When a boy is in his teens he cannot be treated in just the same manner as his little brother, and the result be satisfactory. Already he is putting on his manhood.

CONQUERING ELMER

ELMER LAWSON came in from the field, stumping glumly along after his team. He was "mad all through," and he did not care who knew it.

"No boy of spirit would take what I have taken this afternoon, and make no kick. Dad is getting entirely too cranky. Just because a fellow gets tired and lays down for a minute in the shade is no excuse for giving him a raking like that. What if I did go to sleep for a minute and the team got away from me? No harm was done, and why take such a fit over what might have been? Dad thinks he can order me around just as he pleases. I am going to show him. I shall run away, that's what I shall do."

With his thoughts still in this channel he went through with the evening chores, and sat at the supper table. Just as soon as he could, without rousing suspicion, he went up to his little attic bedroom. Once there he finished his plans. A lump would rise in his throat at the thought of his mother's sorrow at his going, and a picture of his little sister's tear-stained face came before him.

"It is too bad to hurt them so," he said almost aloud, "but I cannot stand it here a day longer. Dad and I cannot get along. He thinks he can boss me like a little kid. I'll show him a thing or two."

When he was certain that all the family were deep in slumber he took the little bundle he had bound up,

opened the window over the shed kitchen, slipped out to the roof of this low room, walked softly over it, and dropped to the ground. It was a bright, moonlight night, and he walked steadily for several hours till he was well out of the home community, then lay down against a straw-stack he spied in a field and slept till daylight.

"Elmer," called his father in the morning, "Elmer." But there was no answer. After a second attempt to waken the boy, a suspicion of the truth came to his mind. He mounted the stairs and opened the door. No one had slept there that night, and the open window told only too well where the boy had got out without being noticed.

Mr. Lawson came downstairs and told his wife what had happened. At the outcry from her mother, Jennie came running to hear the news. Said Mr. Lawson, "Mama, I fear Elmer has run away. He is not in his room, and no one has slept there last night. The window over the kitchen is open, and the screen is off. He has been trifling for days, and I have had to scold him. Only yesterday he lay down and went to sleep without tying the team. I do not begrudge him a little nap this hot weather, and I told him so, but he ought to make the team safe. As it was they dragged the cultivator half across the field. It is a wonder they did not get hurt. I told him such carelessness would never do. He puffed up about it then, but I thought he would get over it."

No one wanted breakfast that morning. Mother was for setting right out to hunt him. Jennie said little, but was weeping herself sick.

"No, Mother, I do not think that best. It is fine weather, and the boy is strong and healthy. If he gets hungry it will be good for him. He has very probably struck south to his Uncle Burt's. Just let him be. We shall hear from him by and by. Rest easy. He is not the first boy who ran away from home. He will know more when he comes back."

"I shall write to Burt's this very day, and ask about him," said the mother.

"I should not do anything of the kind. If he is there he will be waiting for that, and will gloat over the uneasiness he is making. Write if you want to, but say not one word about him. Let him make the first move," was the father's counsel.

It was three months before they heard directly from Elmer, tho his aunt told Mrs. Lawson not to worry, that Elmer was all right. Not once in writing to their brother did the Lawson's speak of Elmer's absence. His first letter home was brave, but between the lines was a bid for an invitation back home.

"Shall I write and tell him we should like to see him home?" asked Mrs. Lawson.

"Oh, yes," cried Jennie, "I want to see him so badly."

"I wouldn't," said Mr. Lawson, "for that is just what he is fishing for. Write him all the news, tell

about Aunt Ellen's visit and the good times we had while they were here. Tell him all about everything on the farm, and how the young stuff is growing. Tell him you are glad he is having a good time, and hope he will continue to enjoy himself. Speak of the promise of the Waltons' coming down for a week-end. He was always wild over their visits. Make your letter as cheerful as possible. Let no word of your loneliness into it. When he comes home we want him to come of his own free will; so let him make his own decisions about it. If any worrying is done let him do it. We know where he is and that he is all right."

Mother and Jennie followed out the advice given to the best of their ability, really entering into the sport of the thing. Maybe their hearts would have failed them if they had seen Elmer's face when he read this letter. He could hardly wait for the answer to his own to come, for he had endured the silence just as long as he could when he wrote. It had puzzled him that his folks had never said one word to his Uncle Burt about him running away. It seemed as tho they were not worrying about it at all. He expected orders to come straight home, and he was secretly planning the bargain he would make with Dad if he came back. But, oh, how he wanted to get back home! The letter held not so much as one word of regret that he was gone. Everything was getting on just as well as when he was there. Elmer was fourteen years old, and thought he was almost a

man, but that night he cried a little after he went to bed.

For two months more he held off. He wrote every week, and either his mother or Jennie answered, but neither of them ever spoke as if they had a thought of him coming home. It certainly was queer. Elmer stood it as long as he could, and then went home.

His mother met him at the door, and kissing him heartily, drew him into the kitchen and shut the door. He had gone to the back door, and meant to open and go right in, but just at the last he felt timid.

"We have been wodering if you had forgotten us, and never intended to make us a visit. I know Jennie and your father will be glad to see you," she said with her very best company manner. He had thought she would fall on his neck and kiss him and make over him like the returned prodigal. Mrs. Lawson chattered away, asking all about Uncle Burt's, and the crops, and all the general subjects of discussion. It gave Elmer a queer feeling.

"We have company," she said when Jennie came from school, "guess who."

"Is it Elmer?" cried Jennie. "How long is he going to stay?" in a half whisper.

"I haven't asked him, but I hope a week at least," said Mrs. Lawson.

"A visit! a week!" thought Elmer.

Jennie, like her mother, had many questions to ask and she said, "I am so glad you found time to visit

us. Mother says she thinks you will stay a whole week. I hope you can stay that long."

When his father came he met Elmer most cordially, just as he would have met the minister. "I am so glad to have you with us again, Elmer, and we want you to feel perfectly at home as long as you are here. Here, take this chair," and his father pressed him to sit in the best rocker. When bedtime came Mr. Lawson said, "We are sorry we haven't a better place for you than your little attic bedroom. We are hoping to build and then we can have a spare bedroom for guests. But Mother will carry up a towel and basin and a pitcher of water. It is sometimes embarrassing to guests for them to have to come to the kitchen to wash. I am sure you will excuse our accommodations, since they are the best we can do.

Had Elmer not heard his father go over those very apologies more than once when a guest had to be stowed away in that attic room? It was maddening to the boy. They had accepted his running away as final, and didn't expect him ever to live at home anymore.

In the morning Elmer was up early, intending to go out and help with the milking. As soon as he began to stir his father came up with a pan of warm water, saying, "It is chilly this morning, and perhaps you will like warm water for washing. But you needn't have got up yet. I am just ready to go out to the chores, and your mother has only begun break-

fast. But if you wish to get up, you will find it comfortable by the front-room fire."

Elmer could not find words to answer; so his father went back downstairs with a very mischievous twinkle in his eyes.

After breakfast Mr. Lawson said, "I shall have to get out to my field work, but you will find plenty to read here in the house, and your mother will enjoy visiting with you. Make yourself right at home. We want you to enjoy every minute you are with us."

"Father," blurted out the boy, "let me go with you to the field."

"Why, bless you, boy, we do not put visitors to work around here," said Mr. Lawson heartily.

"But I am not a visitor. I have come home to stay, if you will let me," said Elmer, the tears very close at hand.

"You have! Well, that is different. Mother, Elmer says he wants to stay home. Shall we allow it?"

"Just as you two agree," answered his mother, "if he likes our fare well enough to stay with us I am willing."

"Well, Elmer, you know how things are run around here. If you are willing to work under present management, I am willing for you to stay. But we do not permit any nonsense anymore than we ever did. If you are willing to obey as a boy should, we shall only be too glad to have you at home again."

"I have had enough of it," and Elmer could not

keep back the tears, "and I will do as you say. I am sorry I acted the fool so."

And that was the end of Elmer's appetite for running off.

"PHYSICIAN, HEAL THYSELF"

"MIRANDA," said Mrs. Silas Jones to her old friend, Mrs. Lane, "I hear you have been having quite a time with Joe of late. I am sorry, for it must be terrible to have the children give trouble."

Mrs. Lane winced under the sympathy of her friend, for Joe was dear to her heart, and she hated to have him spoken against. Being a humble woman she sought to answer her friend as simply as possible, and then to direct the conversation into other channels.

"Yes, he has been giving us some uneasiness," she said, "for he is growing up rapidly and is not able to keep steady."

"I fear it is not altogether that," said Mrs. Jones.

"What do you refer to?" asked Mrs. Lane anxiously.

"Oh, nothing in particular, only that I have been thinking about Joe and you folks a great deal of late, knowing as I do that you are so eager to bring him up right," replied Mrs. Jones.

"Yes, it is the greatest desire of our hearts to rear our children as they should be reared," assented Mrs. Lane.

"I know how you feel, and I have thought that I should talk to you and give you some of *my* experience. You know I have several boys instead of one."

"I am always ready for advice that will help me," said Mrs. Lane.

"In the first place I think that you are too close with him, and then you bring your religion too prominently to the front. For instance, you ask the blessing every time you sit down to the table. That gets old to a growing boy. I tried it a while and found out it would not work. Why Andrew got so that he was late to every meal purposely to miss it. And you have worship twice a day. Once a day is too much of that to suit a boy. They get 'fed up' on that sort of thing till it drives them away from home. Then you are so against smoking that he has to sneak out of your sight to do it. I teach my boys that if they must smoke to do it in the open and before the world. I would rather have my parlor thick with tobacco smoke than to have them think they have to go away from home to do it.

"Card-playing, too, is one of your abhorrences. Joe plays cards, and you might as well know it. If you would do as I am doing you would not have to think of him out with a gang of boys doing it. When I found that Frank was determined to play I had him get some cards for home and teach me, and we have many pleasant evenings together with them. That was where I found out that Joe played. Dancing is another point where you are overstrict. Young folks will dance."

"O Jane," cried Mrs. Lane unable to bear any more, "are there no lines, no principles of right that we should teach our children?"

"You can set up such Puritan principles that it drives the boys away. I know the other way will hold them, for my boys are with me. Of course you could hardly come as far as I have in being one of them, but you could ease up a little."

Mrs. Lane went home very heavy-hearted. The whole fabric of her principles of right had been attacked. She had meant to be a good mother. But Joe was wild. Her tears of perplexity and sorrow fell. All at once she stopped short in her musings, and started off on another line of thought. How about Mrs. Jones's "darling boys" who never gave her any trouble?

There was Frank, a stoop-shouldered, hollow-chested boy of twenty, a cigaret-fiend, and general ne'er-do-well. She thought of Joe's square shoulders and manly bearing, and could not help feeling a thrill of motherly pride. There was Andrew, two years younger than Frank, a little less stooped, but loud-mouthed and vulgar, and noted for his card-playing. He did not do it all at home. The younger Jones boys were coming on in the footsteps of the older ones, and would be in the same class. They knew nothing of godly living, had never attended Sunday-school, and were in every respect irreligious.

Then she thought of the despised family worship, how not only Joe, but every member of the family bowed in reverence with her. Surely they did not feel about it as her neighbor intimated. No, children did not act as her children acted when they were

disgusted with things. She remembered how careful all the children were to wait till someone returned the blessing at meals. She remembered too, how two of her children were living careful and consistent lives, and how they had blessed her for their godly home.

"How foolish I am," Mrs. Lane said aloud, "to give one minute's worry to Jane's words. I would not have my boys like hers. I think she had better go and heal herself before she tries to play physician to other people."

WHICH WAY DO YOU ANSWER?

ROBERT and William are high school students, and so far as school conditions are concerned, they are exactly alike. The parents of both boys desire that they become noble, God-serving men, and are conscientiously guiding the boys in that direction, to the best of their understanding. These parents also recognize the evil tendencies of the social environments of their boys' school life, and the allurements that will draw them away from the cross, and they want to correct these tendencies and protect their boys from the danger.

The boys are of equal nobility and manliness. Robert has a much harder path than William, as I shall try to show.

"Father, what is really wrong in the movies that you do not wish me to attend?" questions Robert.

"The picture-show is an evil, an implement of Satan, and I do not wish you to have anything to do with it," answers the father with spirit. "I thought you understood my position on that thoroughly."

"I do, Father, but I want your arguments that bring you to that conclusion," urged the boy.

"Robert, what is coming over you that you are arguing for the show when I have taught you against it all your life?" The father is sitting up now and looking straight at the boy in a severe way, that is very hard to face.

"I am not arguing for the show. I only want your reasons. I need them," and the boy's voice is fairly pleading.

"You have my judgment and that is sufficient. What evil influence is at work that you should come to me with such questions? I want you to curb all such desires completely."

"But, Father," and the boy's voice holds a note that should have been a warning, "questions come up in school that I cannot answer. Some good religious people do not look at it as you do, and they give their reasons, too."

"It matters little to me what other people think. I know what is right in this matter. The movies are an evil in the land, and so far as my family is concerned shall receive no encouragement," and having given this decision, he turns righteously away without having particularly noticed the look in his son's face.

"Father," asks William in the other home, "what is really wrong with the picture show that you do not wish me to attend?"

"That is rather a wide question, William, and I should answer it better if I knew what you have in mind," and the father looks up with interest.

"Something came up in school today. In class we talked of a book that is being shown down town now, and the teacher advised us to see it. The question of movie censure came up, and we had quite an argument. The teacher spoke of the great good the

picture show was capable of doing, bringing many reasons for her position. Of course she condemned the wrong kind of pictures. Her arguments sounded plausible, and you know she is quite a church-worker. I determined to come to you for your reason, for of course you have some good ones."

"I agree that the moving picture is capable of much good, but that does not change the fact that it is actually doing much evil. There are and have been many pictures that if shown under proper circumstances, would be educational or uplifting, but the majority, shown in the cheap, present-day movie, exalt crime and vivify lust. In plain language they show the ways of crime in the most alluring light. The pick-pocket and burglar, the murderer and black-mailer, the thief and the libertine, are shown at their work. The love triangle in all its sordid particulars is shown in its most attractive and exciting light.

"Men and women are dressed in improper clothing, and are shown together in scenes that off the stage would be absolutely disrespectable. The sacred acts of courtship that are intended to help a man find and win himself a partner for life are enlarged and burlesqued before the public till all sacredness and purity are stripped from them. I believe that all such pictures, and they are by far the majority, are hurtful to all, and especially to the young. Because of these conditions, and to preserve one's own good

influence, one should avoid such movie houses even if they do show an occasional good picture."

"Your reasons, then, are that the pictures generally shown set the young minds thinking on wrong lines that will lead to impure desires and acts, and that being present in such a movie entertainment sets a wrong example, detracts from one's influence for good, and encourages a further development of such programs?"

"Possibly said in plain school-boy manner those are my reasons. Are they sufficient? Or shall we go into it deeper?" The father shows a genuine desire to make his position plain.

"It is different to me now. I shall have to confess that the arguments I heard on the other side confused me. I see your point all right." And William goes away satisfied.

"I do not know why Robert seems so unwilling to take the way he has been taught," his father said afterward. We see one reason that might have influenced him to doubt his father's position.

THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF THE ADOLESCENT CHILD

THE adolescent period, or that period between childhood and maturity, is one of many complexities. Each child is a problem in and of himself, and no general rule can exactly fit any given case. Nevertheless, as a group the characteristics are very much the same, and a careful study of the adolescents as they are, not as we think they ought to be, will make us better able to understand them. As Christian fathers and mothers we have a deep desire to see our children become earnest Christian men and women. For this we work and pray and hope. Yet many parents are either vaguely or definitely dissatisfied with the attempts their adolescent children make in the service of God.

Compared with a life-time the adolescent period is short, yet there is no time in life when there are so many and so varied changes. In the unconscious efforts of the child to keep acquainted with himself during that turbulent period he becomes self-centered, developing plain selfishness, we say.

At this period the sexual nature is developed, the affections are awakened, a completely new sphere of life is revealed, and the child finds himself at the door of manhood, with all the mysteries of life before him. And at this time a new spiritual awakening takes place within him, and he begins to feel his need of God.

By far the majority of people make their first attempts at God's service during this period. There is something about the chaotic condition of his nature to make the adolescent feel his need of God.

We should not expect too much of the adolescent who, ever so sincerely, starts in the service of God. Let us rather consider what we should not expect.

We should not expect adult judgment. He will yet look at things from his own point of view and will come to conclusions that are out of harmony with ours.

And he will not submit easily. His rising individuality asks the exercising of his own mind.

He will not have strength to overcome every temptation. He will have many weaknesses, and possibly do many things that look wrong to us. Remember, that in his being he is contending with many new and untried forces, and his inexperience makes him blunder. Do not thrust at him because he has failed, nor cast a doubt on his religious standing. Perhaps he is as conscious of his fault as are you, and your word of condemnation may be the dart that kills all courage to try. So long as a young person is trying, so long as he has even a feeble hold on God, he is safer than with no hold at all.

Some adolescent children become over-religious. It is a freak of their development and will pass away like some other notions. But while the freak is on they study and pray much, think they receive wonderful calls to religious work, and apparently are

all devotion for God. Some will want to quit school and start preaching; or if they do not go quite so far will find more pleasure in the prayer-meeting than in any young people's sport. And where such traits develop the reaction is liable to be just as strong and leave them with no religious zeal at all. So do not crowd forward the religious adolescent.

In almost all adolescents there is a lack of constancy which makes it hard to depend upon them. Some are sober and serious, others lively and gay, and some first one and then the other. But do not be discouraged with them nor allow them to be discouraged with themselves. The changing years will soon be over.

Seek while a person is in this period to encourage in him a hopeful trust in God and keep alive a desire to serve him, but do not urge him into too public a religious life. Neither discourage him nor push him forward too fast. Judged from your point of view he may be very lacking, or occasionally very headstrong; so learn to be patient and wait for him to come to fuller years.

"She will sleep late every time unless I compel her to get up, and then she is often cross about it. Then it is a constant struggle on my part to make her wear a kitchen apron. And over that she gets saucy. I do not believe a girl who is a Christian ever gets saucy, and I tell her so. Then she likes the boys too well. And the other day she brought a storybook from the library, and I made her take it back."

"Being saucy and persistent are her only faults, then," said the friend, "for sleeping late, hating aprons, and liking the boys and story-books are ordinary characteristics of girlhood. Harriet is impulsive too, doing things on the spur of the moment, and being sorry afterward."

"But will a girl who is a Christian be saucy to her mother?" asked that parent.

"That really depends much upon the mother. At sixteen and younger many girls are so unsettled because of their changing years that they have not the self-control an older person has. If they are nagged at they are very liable to fling back a retort, even tho they suffer remorse for hours or days about it."

"But God can keep a girl as well as an older person, can he not?"

"The grace of God is sufficient for their needs, but it does not make them mature in judgment and self-control. They will yet have the weaknesses due to their youth."

To the same friend Harriet confided her troubles.

"I want to live a good Christian life, and I pray and weep before God in sorrow for my failings. Mama tries me so; for instance, on Sunday mornings. I must get up early six days in the week in order to get to work, and on Sunday I like to sleep late, getting up just in time to get to Sunday-school. I am not really needed for the work. But every Sunday, Mama makes me get up and eat breakfast at the

regular time. Last Sunday I spoke saucily about it, and I have been sorry ever since.

"Then she is always insisting that I wear an apron. I hate aprons. But it is the way I speak and feel that worries me most. I do want to serve God. Then why do I get so vexed over these little things?"

"You are in your changing years, and full of whims. Your apron trouble is only a whim. As for sleeping late, that is an almost universal desire of rapidly developing girls. You speak saucily because of a lack of self-control. You are always sorry afterward, are you not?"

"Sorry! Oh, if I could only make Mother understand how sorry I am! But she says that it is pretended sorrow, and that takes away my courage. Can I ever be a real Christian?

"Mama thinks I like the boys too well. I do enjoy their company, and sometimes I am with someone when Mother does not know it. I am always sorry afterward, but at the time the temptation is great.

"And I like story-books. Mother is very strict about that. Last week I brought one home that had been recommended to me as pure and good, and she never looked at its contents, but made me take it right back. Oh, I want to be a true Christian, but I am always doing something wrong."

"Be patient, little sister, and keep battling on. Your hard struggle now is with yourself, but soon you will begin to see the victory. The very fact

that you are struggling against your faults foreshadows the time when you shall overcome them."

We get a glimpse of the struggle this young soldier had, and what it meant to her to live a Christian in her teens. At twenty she was a model of quiet, Christian young womanhood.

There are no trials any harder, and no battles that take more of the courage of the human heart, than those fought by our teen-age soldiers of the cross. May God help us to encourage them.

THE CHILDREN GROWN

Out of the nest the birdlings fly,
Trying their wings 'neath the wide blue sky;
Bidding adieu to the love that wrought,
That only joy to their lives be brought.

Up to their soaring loves they smile,
Glad parenthood they bore a while,
Remembering too, their dawning day,
When out of the nest they flew away.


Anne Shriber

HER CONSOLATION

SHE stood in the doorway with her son at her side. Her hand rested on his shoulder, and she was pleading with him, while hot tears, the hottest she had ever shed, burned down her cheeks. He was leaving home, and he was just at the age when he most needed good home influence. She knew his weak nature too well to hope that he would keep clean out in the world alone just when the flush of youth was upon him. It was giving him over to evil to let him go, but she could not restrain him.

Swiftly her thoughts ran back over the years since the boy had been given her. She saw the agonizing prayers and tears she had poured out at the throne that his father might wake up and do a father's part by their son. She saw how she had tried to be both father and mother to him all the way along. She remembered how she had given him to God while he was a baby in her arms. All was clear before her. She recalled the patience with which she had tried to guide his little feet in the right way.

Then came the picture of those unhappy seasons when the father's influence had undone the good she had tried to do. Now the open breach had come and the boy was leaving home and the influence that she might have over him, going out to do for himself in the world that cared so little what it did to mothers' boys. She knew how the world would draw him in.

When she had watched him out of sight she went back to her room, her heart breaking with sorrow. Kneeling in prayer she called on One who hears the broken-hearted. "O God," she cried, "I have done the best I could. I have not been careless; I have done my best."

Her heart grew more quiet, and an answer came from God—the answer of a good conscience, "You have done what you could."

Her soul was quieted, and looking up she said, "How could I have borne this sorrow if I had not had the answer of a good conscience? What if I had been careless?"

WHY MOTHER CRIED

"WHAT makes you look so starry-eyed?" asked Mr. Banks of his wife when she came into his room with her face bearing an expression of mingled joy and sorrow.

"I have just learned the meaning of something that has puzzled me since my girlhood," was her reply.

"Let us hear the story," he said with interest.

"I have tried to tell you how it hurts me to have our little girl growing up so fast. I miss the cuddling and the petting, the combing of her hair, and buttoning of her dresses, and pinning of her collars. She goes to her room, puts up her hair, dresses herself, and comes out ready to go. All I have to do is to look her over to see that her hair is not too extravagantly arranged and her dress is tidily fixed. Critic and judge seem to be all that I am in such things anymore.

"But this morning she called out, 'Mother, I cannot get this sash tied. Will you come and help me?' I hurried in and did what she asked with a pleasure that surprized me. And while I was almost in tears of thankfulness for the privilege—now you think I am silly—a scene in my own girlhood came up.

"Sister and I had been learning to sew under Mother's direction. But as Mother had been in poor health for some time we concluded that it was too much of a strain upon her to have even that over-

sight; so we covenanted together one day to learn it alone. We got the cloth and spread it out on the table and laid the patterns on it and after much discussing and planning the dress was cut out. Together we went to Mother's room, fully expecting her commendation for our thoughtfulness, for we knew she had overheard what we were doing.

"But we found Mother in tears. With unerring judgment we knew that we were the cause of those tears, and were grieved that we should have done anything to hurt her feelings. We asked what was the matter.

" 'Go on girls with your sewing, and do not mind me. I shall soon be all right,' she said.

"But we were not satisfied, and insisted till she said brokenly, with the tears flowing down her cheeks, 'Girls, you do all the housework and carry all the responsibility of the home, but I have flattered myself that I was necessary to your sewing. But even that you are doing without asking me anything. I do not seem to be necessary anymore.'

" 'Not necessary, Mother! Why home would not be home without you. We should much rather have had your help, but we worked it out ourselves to save you the worry. We did it to please you,' we said.

" 'I know you did, girls, and I appreciate your thoughtfulness; but you are growing up so fast that soon I shall have no little girls at all. I guess I am

jealous of your independence.' And a fresh burst of tears wet her cheeks.

"We went back to our sewing puzzled, and when Mother lay down for her nap, we talked it over while she was out of hearing. We decided that it was because she was sick that she acted that way. I know now what was hurting her was the fact that life was robbing her of her babies.

"I am sure I know now why Mother cried. Mother has had to give us all up, for her home is empty. And that is what is coming to us. It is part of parenthood, I suppose."

A FATHER'S SURRENDER

HE BELIEVED that when children came to those years when they entered into their life's responsibilities that each one should be allowed to choose for himself. He had watched his children grow, and he had hopes and dreams for them. He took much pleasure in their school-life and entered with his eldest daughter into her plans and hopes for a high place in the teaching force of her State.

But there came a change in his daughter's plans. She had a deep spiritual awakening, and out of this awakening grew a deep conviction that she should dedicate her life to the work of God. No such plan had ever entered into the father's thoughts. It was hard for him. He watched her for sometime, knowing the question that she was weighing in her mind, and hoping that she should decide to go on with her teaching program and give up what seemed to him a foolish step.

The day came, however, when she came to him and told him that she had definitely decided to give up her teaching and give her time wholly to the gospel work. He did not think this appropriate work for a woman, and especially for this shy daughter of his. But he remembered the convictions that had always been his since he was a young man, that children should be allowed to choose their own lives.

"It is not my place to forbid you. I want you to do what you think is right for you to do, altho your choice is a terrible disappointment to me."

His daughter left him with tears in her eyes. She had always admired her father for his fairness and honesty, and now her admiration was greater than ever. She purposed then to prove to him that he had nothing to be ashamed of in her choice, and to show him a time when her choice was not disappointing.

GOD TOOK HIM

THE PASTOR came into the stricken home. The pall of sorrow lay heavy over all. Sorrow almost too great to be borne seemed to be breaking the old father's heart. Side by side they walked into the room to view together the face of the son who now lay cold in death in the strength of his young manhood. Both pastor and parent had expected much from this boy; but all those hopes were now dead. Why had the blow fallen here?

Hard sobs shook the old father, and he seemed to be choking, so great was his grief. His sorrow seemed to be more than death alone could bring. "I thought he was mine. I did not suppose the Lord would take him. I kept him for myself." And saying this the father turned away. The pastor said nothing then, but he thought he knew what was causing such depths of grief, tho he would not wound the bleeding heart deeper by mentioning it.

The mother sought opportunity to confide in the pastor. "Comfort Father if you can. His is more than natural grief. He has opposed the boy in ways that he ought not, and now he regrets it."

But there was nothing the pastor could say that would lift the load. He reminded the old man that his son had died a Christian, and pointed to his triumphant death. He spoke of heaven, and of seeing him again; but the father only shook his head, and said, "I wanted him for myself, but God took him."

A few months before his death the son had come to his pastor for counsel and encouragement. He was an earnest Christian, as both his parents seemed to be. He felt his call to the ministry, but had not gained his father's consent. He had always been an obedient son, and now he did not know where duty lay.

"Father," he had said, "I have prayed over this a long time, and I am sure I have a call from God to the ministry. I want to begin to prepare myself for that holy calling."

"My son, put that out of your mind. Never speak to me again about it. Your place is here with your mother and me," the hasty old man had said, and the son had gone away discouraged. He had tried again to talk with his father, but with no better success.

"His manner stuns me," the young man had confided to his pastor. "I have always obeyed him, and to defy his wishes seems more than I can do. I cannot tell what the outcome will be."

So the last sad rites were said, and the pastor went back home. But if the chastened father could have spoken to all the parents in Christendom, he would have warned them of the possibly bitter regrets when the children are not given to God.

LIVING AGAIN IN THE CHILDREN

ISN'T it hard to see your sons and daughters leave the home you have worked so hard to give them, to go out and make homes for themselves?" someone asked the little white-haired mother with the bright eyes and rosy cheeks.

"Yes," she answered, "a little hard right at the time. But when children are happily married one lives over again in them.

"Now, there was the time Nina and Tom were courting. Nina was open with me and I enjoyed their courtship almost like when her father and I were young.

"And when James married it was like living our young days again to see him learning to be a real man like his father.

"And when the babies were coming I have enjoyed looking forward to the event and making ready for it with my daughters and daughters-in-law almost as I did for my own babies. Why, the little grand-children are almost as dear as my own.

"It is wonderful, watching young love. I get so much joy in watching it that I cannot honestly wish my children with me again. And by and by their father and I shall be going away, and it is a comfort to know each child is safe under his own roof.

"If you want the sting taken out of having children-in-law, live over your young life in your children and their companions."

BREAKING BETTIE'S ENGAGEMENT

BETTIE WILLIS was as dutiful a daughter as one could ask for. When she was yet a girl in her teens her mother's health had completely failed, and Bettie had taken upon herself the place of housekeeper for the family. She was not the oldest of the children, but she felt this her place, and she was a most faithful and diligent young housekeeper for seven years or more. She was of a naturally sociable nature and loved the company of young people her own age, but she had to give much of this up because of her home responsibilities.

When Bettie was in her early twenties she met Arthur Lee, and altho they were not suited to each other in disposition, they became lovers and were engaged to be married. To Bettie's mother this was a very sad thing, for she saw the difference in their natures and knew that Arthur would never understand Bettie's open, frank, social nature. He was gloomy and morose, and suspicious of the motives of others.

At first Mrs. Willis tried to talk to Bettie, but Bettie took the things that were said to Arthur, and his quickly suspicious mind saw only a design to prevent their marriage, and he urged Betty to leave home before Mrs. Willis had succeeded in carrying out her design.

Bettie allowed herself to be so influenced, and left home, where she was greatly needed.

The time had come within one week of the appointed wedding day. Bettie had her wedding dress made, and all plans for the wedding were arranged.

But Mother Willis had been praying. Her prayer was, "Lord, thou seest how it is with Bettie. I cannot talk to her, but thy Spirit canst talk, and wilt thou so work it about that this union shall never be. Thou knowest what a daughter she has been all these years, and now do not let the light of her life go out in this fashion. And Lord, let the engagement be broken without breaking hearts."

Arthur asked Bettie to postpone the wedding for a month, as he was not quite ready. To Bettie's surprize she was not disappointed, and gladly gave her consent to the postponement. And before that month was up both Bettie and Arthur were out of the notion of marrying. Neither knew why they felt so, but the urge was gone.

Bettie came home and told her mother about it. And after a few weeks when she could look back over it all she thanked God in her heart that God had heard her mother's prayers and saved her from a life of unhappiness.

A few years later another more worthy man sought Bettie's hand and won her. Their home has been an unusually happy one, and Bettie has always had great thankfulness in her heart to God and to her mother for the escape she made in her youth.

JOHN GRIFFIN'S LOYALTY

JOHN GRIFFIN was not a brilliant man. From his childhood the neighbors had made him the butt of their good-natured jokes, for they all liked John.

The Griffin homestead flourished under John's management, for old Mr. Griffin had been a semi-invalid for years before his death. Mrs. Griffin's health was not good either, and her family cares were many. Before Mr. Griffin died he asked John to promise to stand by his mother and the girls as long as they should need him, and John promised willingly, and had carried the responsibility faithfully in all the years since his father's death.

John was not different from other young men in that he had dreams of a home of his own. There was a girl in the village a few miles below the homestead whom he had loved devotedly for many years. He was just a young fellow, not long out of school, when he first began his courtship of Stella Moore, but it took ten years of persistent wooing to win from her the promise he craved.

All the plans and hopes that had been smothered down through those years of uncertainty now blossomed and bore fruit, as the happy John built the house and planned the orchard and barn-lots of the home that was to be theirs on the farm adjoining the homestead, which he had bought for his own. He did not intend to bring Stella into his mother's home, but they were to live to themselves on his own place,

and be close by to oversee and direct the outdoor life on the old homestead.

It was John's family that had held back Stella's promise for years. Old Mrs. Griffin was known for her driving ways, and Stella could not bring herself to come into her home as daughter-in-law. But when she was certain that such a requirement would not be made, she consented to the marriage.

But the two homes would be close together. Mother Griffin had ruled in John's life these thirty odd years, and it was not likely that she would give this rule over easily. It seemed to Stella that John ought to realize this danger and set himself against it. She, Stella Moore, could brook no interference in her own home. So with these things in her mind she came to John with a suggestion that took the form of an ultimatum to him.

"John," she said, "you have always listened to your mother and have done about as she said in everything. You must realize that there will be a difference after we are married. You and I must govern our home without the help of any outsider, and you must count your mother an outsider there."

What she said was said bluntly, and to John's mind it meant this—that when he and Stella were married the close and friendly relations between him and his mother must cease, and she be as a stranger to him. It was unthinkable.

Very seriously and prayerfully John considered this ultimatum. He loved Stella with all the love of

his loyal soul, but he loved his mother, and besides he had a duty to her. She was not perfect, and sometimes she tried his righteous soul, but after all she was his mother, and had a right to his care and attention. Then his promise to his father on his deathbed came like a light before him. No, he could not turn against his mother, not even for Stella, and if marriage meant that, he must let it all go out of his life.

Talk of heroes! No renunciation was ever more sincere nor complete than that made by John Griffin, whom we have said was not a brilliant man.

He went to Stella and told her very tenderly, but nevertheless firmly, what his decision was. "I love you Stella, but I have a duty to my mother. I promised Father on his deathbed I would stand by Mother and the girls as long as they needed me, and Mother will need me as long as she lives. I have promised God the same thing often when things have been hard. Besides, she is my mother, and I ought to take care of her if I never had made a promise. I had not meant that you should live with her. You would not be happy there. But I thought we could manage in a house of our own. But, Stella, I must stand by my mother as long as she needs me."

Stella saw that John had taken stronger meaning from her words than she had meant, but she saw something else, and that was his loyal heart to right and duty. "He would stand by me just as loyally if I became afflicted, or when I am old," she said

to herself, while tears rushed to her eyes as she saw the test to which she had put him.

"John," she said very gently, "I was wrong in the demand I made. I did not realize how love and duty bound you to your mother. I shall do the best I can and be patient with her."

After that experience John could always understand Abraham's feelings when Isaac was given back to him after he had freely given him over as a sacrifice of love and devotion.

WHAT CARL SAW

CARL BEYER had grown to young manhood on the farm where he was born, a lovely old place on the edge of a village that lay just on the outskirts of the capital city of the State. Thus Carl had been able to combine the freedom and outdoor life of the farm with the familiar social life of the village and the culture of the city, and he felt himself a part of all three.

Carl had met and admired many girls, but he had never thought seriously of marriage until he became acquainted with Cora Vann, a slender, blue-eyed, fair-haired girl who had moved with her parents into the pretty cottage just inside the village limit and less than a quarter of a mile from the Beyer homestead.

Mrs. Beyer was a friendly woman, and she soon made acquaintance with the new neighbor, and a friendly intimacy grew up between the two families, allowing the courtship between the young people to grow and blossom without a cloud to mar its brightness.

But it was this very intimacy that began the revelation of facts that enlightened Carl.

One day Mrs. Beyer was in the Vann home, when an incident occurred, a thing of such trivial importance that ordinarily it would have passed without notice or comment, but which on this occasion crossed the wish of Cora Vann, and Cora flew into a

violent rage, storming and almost cursing in her anger. The gentle Mrs. Beyer was astonished and terribly shocked.

And that was the girl her Carl intended to marry!

She did not tell Carl, but she hoped that something would happen to open his eyes to the real Cora. Weeks passed on, and the time was approaching when Carl and Cora would be married, and nothing happened to reveal Cora's fault to Carl.

Mrs. Beyer had other occasions to see Cora's ire vented on various members of her family, and once she became angry with Mrs. Beyer and railed on her. Never to her dying day would Mrs. Beyer forget the girl's eyes and face in that stormy scene, nor the sinking feeling of heart as she contemplated taking that vixen into the family circle. Oh, if Carl could only see!

"Mother," said Carl one day, "are you not glad for me that I am to have such a dear girl for my wife as Cora Vann? She seems to be the gentlest, purest creature in the world. I know you and she will be great pals."

He looked into his mother's face as he spoke and there he saw the hesitancy which it seemed to him had been growing in his mother's manner whenever he had spoken of his marriage.

"Mother," he almost cried, "do you not love Cora? Surely you have no fault to find with one so pure and sweet as she."

"I want you to be happy, Carl, and I would not find fault with the girl you wish to marry. But I fear that you are marrying before you have had opportunity to know her as well as you should. I have been wishing you would put the marriage off for three months. Would you do that at my request, Carl?" and Mrs. Beyer laid a soft hand upon the arm of her son.

"But Cora and her sisters are counting on the wedding next month," he said doubtfully.

"I know they are, Carl, and that to postpone the wedding will be a disappointment, but I believe you will both be happier for waiting."

"All right, Mother, I will ask her about it tonight. I have been a little shy at hurrying matters so myself." And Carl stooped and kissed his mother as he left the house for Cora's home.

It was not much more than an hour when he came home. His mother saw him coming, his head up, and his body swinging on with a stride that she had known from his infancy meant triumph. He came straight to her and took her in his arms. "Mother, you wise little mother," he cried, "you have done me a great favor."

"What do you mean, Carl," she asked wonderingly.

"You have let me see what I was getting into before it was too late for me to back out. If you had told me I should never have believed, but now I know

just what you are driving at," he said, a whimsical smile on his lips.

"Still, Carl, you leave me in suspense. I want to know what has happened," she said earnestly.

"Well, I told her that circumstances had come up that made me wish to postpone the wedding for three months if she could manage. I told her I was sorry to disappoint them. Oh, you know the things I would say, or intended to say. But she did not give me opportunity. Mother, in all my life I have never heard a person, man or woman, rave as that girl raved. She said things that were entirely out of reason. Oh, what if she had been my wife! Thank God, she was not my wife, and she never shall be. When I could get a word in I told her I had broken definitely and surely, and why. It is all off. I am thankful I saw before it was too late."

WHAT HER FATHER REQUIRED

MILDRED BARLOW and Sam Wells had been keeping company for sometime. Mr. Barlow looked on with much interest, ready to lay a warning hand upon his daughter if he saw any indications of unfairness in Sam. He liked Sam, but he did not altogether trust him. Sam had been somewhat wild and had kept company with girls who were not always the kind he should want his daughter with. There had even been rumors of wild night parties, with Sam Wells as a member in them.

That there was nothing wild nor unchaste in his courtship of Mildred, Mr. Barlow felt certain, for he was careful to account for all their hours, and he felt that he could trust Mildred. But he saw that the jolly Sam was entering greatly into Mildred's affections. He wanted Mildred to be happy with a happiness that lasts.

At last the evening came when Sam sought an opportunity to ask Mildred's father for her hand. "I am not worthy of such a prize," Sam said very shyly and self-consciously, "but we care for each other and we want your blessing upon us."

"Sam," said Mr. Barlow kindly, "I have watched over Mildred all her life. She is like the apple of my eye, so dear is she to me. Her happiness has always been first in my thoughts, and I would not refuse her anything that would be for her good, not even you. But you know, Sam, that you have been

pretty wild and you have not always been as careful of the company you kept as you should have been. I have heard reports that make me doubtful of you. I believe you are asking the hand of a girl who is pure and innocent, but are you as clean as she? Have you kept yourself as pure as you think she is? If you should marry with any taint in your blood her happiness and your own would be wrecked for life. Are you willing to go with me to a doctor and submit to a physical examination that I may know that you are fit to be my daughter's husband?"

"Mr. Barlow," said Sam humbly, "I admit I have run pretty wild, but I have not stooped to dishonorable things. I have no taint in my blood. But that you may be thoroughly satisfied I shall be glad to go with you for the examination you ask."

And they went together to a good physician and got his certificate assuring Mr. Barlow that Sam was all right. In after years Sam was glad that his father-in-law had been firm in this. And he determined to see that any man who should take his daughter in years to come as her husband, should pass the same examination.

THE BARGAIN

I HAVE read how one father helped his son to pass a grave danger-point without injury to his future.

John was in his teens. He had been a good, reliable boy all through his school-life until now. But he was causing his mother some uneasiness at present, and her fears she thought best to confide to her husband, hoping that he would have some helpful plan.

The two of them were sitting alone in the parlor, when a sigh from her lips called his attention.

"What is the trouble, Mother?" he asked.

"I am uneasy about John," was the answer.

"What has John been doing now?"

"He is in love," she answered quietly.

"In love! the idea, and not out of his teens."

"Yes, in love, and with such a frivolous, silly girl. I never thought he would admire her type. It will be a real calamity to him and to us."

"He is too young to think of such things. Why, he ought to stay in school several years yet. It is preposterous," said the father.

"You were about his age when we first kept company, were you not?" she said, shyly looking at him.

"That is entirely different," he answered more coolly. "But leave John to me. I will talk to him."

At the first opportunity the father had his talk.

"My son," he said, "I want to talk with you about the girl question."

Immediately the boy had his guards up and was

ready to defend his position and his right to make his own choice in life.

The father did not oppose him, nor contend, but said quietly, "I do not wish to dictate to you in your own personal affairs. I only desire to make a bargain with you. I do not know the girl, but your mother is uneasy. Will you, in considering this, find an answer to the following questions? If you can answer them satisfactorily, we shall have no objection in the matter: Does she dress modestly? What does she read? What amusements does she enjoy? Is she fond of the exciting picture-show and theater? Does she attend church and Sunday-school regularly? And will she allow you to buy her expensive presents from your monthly allowance?"

The boy studied a moment, and then answered soberly, "I'll do it, Father. That is only fair."

A few weeks later the mother came again for a confidential talk with her husband. Now her face was shining and her heart light.

"John and the girl are all off. He told me that he found that she dressed immodestly, that she delighted in the most exciting and thrilling works of fiction, that she enjoyed the most vulgar forms of dancing, and the most daring of the picture-shows, and that she would allow him to buy expensive presents for her from his monthly allowance. He said he was disgusted with her, and that he had entirely quit. I do not know what you said to him, but God has answered my prayers."

AS LELA LEFT HOME

MARY ALLISON and her daughter Lela were having one more of those good heart talks that marked their course as mother and daughter. This was a specially serious one, for Lela was just going to her own home after the wedding, leaving her mother's home to become the mistress of a new one.

To Mrs. Allison it was a very painful thing to give her daughter over to the new life. If her will had been granted the girl would have stayed with her years yet, for she was very young. But the time had come as will come in most daughters' lives when they of their own free will give themselves out of mother's care to the love and care of one who seems little more than a stranger.

But in this extremity, for extremity it seemed to the mother, she wanted to be as good a mother-in-law as she had been a mother.

"Lela, my child, you are entering upon a life far different from that you have had at home. Here you have been shielded from every pain and care. You know absolutely nothing about sorrow and care, and almost nothing about pain or responsibility. Possibly I have shielded you too much, but it has seemed that I could do nothing less than protect you from things that are hard."

"I know, Mother," said Lela, lifting a hand lovingly to her mother's face, "that you have done everything in the world that you could for me. But

I am not afraid now, for I know that George will be good to me. We love each other so."

"I know you love each other, Lela, and I am glad. But neither of you knows what lies ahead. Life will not be as rosy and pleasant as it looks to you now. Wifehood and motherhood are not strewn with roses alone, and everything will not be easy. George may desire to shield you as you have been shielded here, but because of the very nature of life he cannot. You are his helpmeet, and you must stand by his side and meet the storms of life. I do not want you to be one of those hothouse wives that is no helper at all. You will find this new life far different from the life you have here with your father and me."

"O Mother, no one could be better than you have been," said Lela, quick tears filling her eyes.

"I have not done all that my heart has craved to do for you. But if I am a good mother-in-law the relations between you and me must change in some respects. I believe that you have been free to come to me with your trials and heartaches, as well as your joys. Has it not been so?"

"Yes, Mother, I have always come to you with everything," she said.

"That is just the point I want to speak about now. Till now I have reveled in the fact that I held first place in your life. Now I am second, for another comes first. George must always come before me. Now, I must not know all your little sorrows

and cares, for there is a secret place where only your husband shall enter. Do you understand?"

"I am not certain that I know just what you mean. I shall always love and trust you and confide in you in the same old way," said Lela.

"Yes, Lela, love me and trust me the same old way. But you must not confide in me in the old way. There will come between you and George little misunderstandings and heartaches that must not be confided to others. Do not dishonor me nor your husband by coming to me with his faults and shortcomings and all your little petty trials. Keep these things and find your own solution. Of course if you are ever really in trouble, come to me, but not with things you can solve yourself.

"There is a secret life between husband and wife that must be kept safe from every prying or friendly eye. Be true to George in all these things. Never be one of those wives who tell others those things that should be kept sacred to husband and wife alone. Remember that your first duty is to your husband. I never wish to pry into your private life."

"Mother, I see what you mean, and I shall try to be careful. I know you will never give us trouble. But I always want to feel that you understand."

"Yes, dear, I want always to understand. That is the reason that I would have my daughter always reserve a place in her heart sacred to her home and her husband, where even her mother may not enter in. I want to be a good mother-in-law."

GRANDMA ALLISON'S ADVICE

MARY," said Grandma Allison to her daughter-in-law, "how are you getting along in the role of mother-in-law?"

"Mother," answered Mary Allison, "I am not getting along as I wish I were. I always lived so very close to Lela and I have wanted to continue that way. And so far as Lela is concerned I really see no more change than one would naturally expect in the new conditions. She is the same daughter, kind, loving, and confiding. But I do not get close to George. I always dreamed that when this time came I should have the confidence of Lela's companion as I have hers. That has seemed the ideal way. But George does not let me get close to him. He is respectful and kind and I can feel that he likes me well enough, but after all, we are strangers."

"That is very much as it should be," answered Grandma. "We mothers-in-law can often be the more useful if we do not become too familiar. I have been mother-in-law a good while and a good many times, and I have learned to be fully content with the respect and good-will of my children's companions. Each child in marrying has brought a new combination of conditions, so that no two of my children's homes are alike. Each home has its own problems that must be met in its own way. The responsibility of meeting those problems is not mine, but theirs. If I interfere in the least I am a meddling

third party, a position that I neither admire nor covet."

"I have not wanted to interfere in their affairs in the least, but to feel that I had a place in George's affections. I have wanted him to think of me as a mother, and me to think of him as a son."

"It will take time, Mary, for a condition like that to come about. Some of my children-in-law do feel that way. You do, Mary, but others are and always will be strangers. I have found it best to go on my way treating them kindly and pleasantly, always ready to lend a helping hand or a bit of advice when it is desired, but just as willing to keep still when my advice and help are not desired."

"What do you do about the great differences of opinions? Now George and I look at things from different angles entirely. Lela, who has been brought up under our standards, has married one whose ideals are much different. There is a gulf between us that is only bridged by Lela's love for us both."

"That is a condition that always comes when our children marry. The adjusting of George's standards to Lela's will bring about home conditions that will be different from those in either your home or George's parents' home. If you are a wise mother-in-law you will keep aloof from that home and let them build to suit themselves."

"But it is hard to see them take a course that I see is not for the best. I fairly itch to tell them what to do and how to manage. But I do not feel that I

dare to do it. George would not understand, I am certain. I have kept my hands and my tongue off so far. As I said, George is a stranger to me and I do not see why he will see and persist in doing as he does. But I try not to let Lela know how I feel."

"Mary," said Grandma with a wise little smile, "learning how to be a good mother-in-law is one of the hardest places in motherhood. To hold first place with a child for twenty years, more or less, and then see that child take to her life another, a stranger at that, and give him first place, is not easy. But it is God's way and we must allow it. If Lela's married life is a success, this stranger, George, must be allowed first place in her life, and you must step back. There is nothing that will bring the confidence and esteem you so much desire as for him to know that you will not interfere in their home life."

THE END OF THE WAY

As the golden rays of the setting sun
Fling back their glory when day is done,
Painting the landscape with colors bright.
Ere they are lost in the coming night;
So old age, lighted by hope and love,
Throws back to us rays from heaven above:
And the two who launched in the morning fair
Look forward now to the glory there.



WHAT HER FATHER MEANT TO HER

THE three of us sat in the little office, discussing the problems that will come up in religious education. We were talking of the best way to combat wrong home influences, a subject that was very sore upon our hearts.

"We struggle and struggle," the younger member said, "to build up a right understanding of spiritual things, and then some incident of home life overthrows all that we have done. For instance, the simple undertaking of teaching the children the Fatherhood of God. We tell the children that God is kind and loving like a father. And perhaps in the class is a child whose father is not kind, is not careful, is not loving. When we tell him that God is like a father, what have we done for him?"

I knew she was right, for just then I thought of little Tim, the child who would not be interested in learning about God. At last his teacher hunted up his home and learned that his father was a drunkard and brutal in his family. Then she told Tim that God was like a mother, tender and kind, and Tim became interested.

But before I was done thinking of Tim, the older member of the board had spoken.

"You are right about home influences coloring religious teaching," she said. "Now, till I was nearly grown I never heard the name of God mentioned but

I thought of my father. God was like my father, and how easy it was to love him! We had a good God if he was like Father. That was what my father meant to me."

What a testimony! No doubt this old man, long ago laid to rest in the church yard, was little known in the world, but in his home he was able to symbolize the good God to his growing daughter. And what the advantages of children of such a father. Both by example and by inheritance he gives them a godly mind, a noble character, a gentle spirit, making them strong in the battles of life.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A MOTHER?

MARTHA DALLAS was the mother of two sons; both of them loved to the very depths of her heart. Together at her knee they learned those first lessons in truth and purity that were to make them good men.

She learned as the years went by what pain and care and toil were, for it took all these to keep her boys on the right way.

Then came the years when they at manhood's doors were choosing their own way, sometimes forgetting the prayers and tears of the mother at home. But she did not give up hope nor cease her prayers and tears for them. Every true mother will appreciate what Mother Dallas' prayers and thoughts were through these trying years.

One day a message came to her that struck terror to her heart and almost took all the courage from her soul. She went to Jim, her Jim, in trouble, and such trouble! She visited him there behind the prison-bars and heard him sob out his sorrow and remorse. He told her of his trouble, and that he was guilty of the crime charged against him. She sat through the trial, she heard the verdict, but she did not leave her boy. She visited him often, her last visit being just before he was taken away to fill his term in the State prison. Her only hope was his promise to seek God.

Those cruel, aching days and weeks. This was motherhood—to bear, to nurture, to train, to pray, to hope, and then to have all vanish on the altar of one young man's will. This was what it meant to be a mother, this was her reward—to suffer beyond endurance; to feel a sense of shame when she had hoped for pride; to love when it seemed that her love was all that kept her from dying; to wring her hands in helpless, hopeless grief.

Jim had been such a sweet child, such a dear boy, so full of promise; and now, oh, God have mercy, now he was shut away in a prison-cell because he was unfit to be free.

If Jim were dead she could go forth with her sorrow, unafraid, unashamed. But now her best friends covered their mouths before they spoke his name; and her grief, her love even, must be covered, smothered, hidden, lest her very tears make them hate him worse. This was motherhood!

John grew to manhood, choosing the way that Jim had missed. People forgot that he was Jim's brother and gave him warm confidence and respect. He sought his mother's God and gave himself entirely to his service. One day he stood looking at his mother's blessed, patient face, and stooping he took her in his arms, and said, "Mother, beloved, to you I owe all that I am. I go forth in the service of God. But behind me in all that I do I have your prayers, your love, and your unselfish interest. Every ideal and every holy aspiration that I have I learned at your

knee. God is good to a man to whom he has given such a mother."

Motherhood, what did it mean then? Joy, a thrill of pride, dreams fulfilled, peace, happiness too great for words. She had given to the world a man able to go forth and fight life's battles. She had given back to God a child who was doing the Master's service like Samuel of old. Every dream of her life was fulfilled in John, her John, her pride and her joy. In him she went to the top of motherhood's blessedness.

Then she mused on life. She had gone to the depths of sorrow and to heights of joy in motherhood. Did she love John more than Jim? No, she loved her boys the same. Jim had fallen, but he held the possibility of good, and through God's grace, the promise of better things. John had risen, but he held the possibility of failure, and he still needed her prayers and love. Only by God's grace did he stand.

Motherhood means to go to the depths with her children, loving them there; to go to the heights with her children; loving them there. Motherhood is feeling the keenest pain and the keenest joy that life can bring, and feeling either, to go on loving and protecting still.

THEIR LIFE TOGETHER

ROBERT was a young man of upright, manly character, honest and sincere, and he had come to manhood clean. Anna was a pure-minded, virtuous girl in whose character principles of right and justice were deeply imbedded. These two loved and married.

Robert came of a family of robust boys and girls, all of whom had learned from infancy to give and take in the most whole-hearted fashion, while Anna was an orphan-girl, reared in a family of "grown-ups" who gave her her board and keep for the work she could do for them. She had been brought up in the most orthodox fashion, while Robert had no religious training at all.

Robert was undemonstrative and reserved, keeping himself under perfect control; Anna was impulsive, quick-spoken, and demonstrative.

Robert loved in a quiet, reserved manner, never allowing a look or word to reveal his feelings to an outsider; Anna was frank and affectionate in heart and manner.

Anna cared little for reading, and if she did read it was a religious book or magazine; Robert was a constant reader of anything and everything, religious literature excepted.

Anna's mind was cast in a religious, reverential mold; Robert's decidedly not so.

His ideals of home-life were cast from the bustling household from which he came: hers from dreams of the home she hoped to have some day.

He came to marriage with his heart filled with home-love and affection: she came with her heart empty and longing for that which she had never known.

With all these differences of nature and thought they married. He brought her to the little claim shanty he had built for her, for he had just gained his majority and had taken a claim for himself in the neighborhood where his father lived. She brought the few simple things she had been able to gather for home comforts, and enough of her own meager earnings to buy the furniture absolutely necessary to set up housekeeping. After that came years of hard work.

They covenanted never to quarrel. If one should be overcome with anger, the other was to keep still till the storm was over. And they kept that vow. Many times in the first year her feelings were severely hurt, and she spent a few hours each time in tears while he looked on in perplexity, wondering what he could have done to bring on such a storm. He was the steady one in those first years.

When the children came they covenanted again never to cross each other in their management. This vow was also kept. Their children never ran from one to the other for sympathy in time of correction or punishment.

Financially they got along very well for a few years, and the neighbors noted that "Bob had got a good start."

Then the reverses came and all was swept away, and they were left deeply in debt. They had a family of five or six to support and Anna's health was poor. Under the strain Robert sometimes forgot to be kind, and in his own struggle he did not see how hard, how very hard it was for Anna. It seemed as if their love was growing cold and their hearts distant. Those were bitter and hard years, and they lasted for nearly if not quite ten years.

Then the tide turned again. After a while the children began to grow up and leave home. They went out without the memory of quarreling or nagging in their home. For Robert and Anna, in spite of the hardships they had been through had kept their vow. In the long struggle she had grown to love God more, and he to know her God.

Sitting by her side when they were shelling seed-corn in the old crib one day, he confided to her that it was the influence of her life that had given him strength along the way. She told him that it was from him that she had in many things learned what right really was. As they grew older they talked more together, and as the home-nest grew empty they had more time for each other.

At last they were old and their backs were bent with years. Then their children smiled as they noted how alike father and mother had grown. On almost

any subject you needed not to consult both to have their opinion, for if one should describe a circumstance or happening, and then the other should tell about it, almost the same expressions would be used, and the comments be exactly the same. Hand-in-hand they liked to walk out to view the orchard or garden, their low voices murmuring all the way as they chatted comfortably together. They found as much to talk about as in their courtship days.

This marvelous molding together had not come by either of them giving up his personality, but by each yielding something to the other. They know now that in those long, poverty-laden years they did not grow apart, but it was only a portion of the process that molded them together. Love between them is as deep and pleasant now as in their younger days, yes deeper and better. So God meant that their lives should be molded together.

MOTHER'S RUG

MOTHER HALLER sat in her room on Hall A, Room No. 22, her sewing-machine before her and her lap full of fluffy cloth. She had a pleasant face framed by hair that was a mixture of golden-brown and gray, and soft dark eyes that were full of feeling and understanding. With her always was a gentle spirit born of Christian courage and fortitude.

No, Mother Haller was not an inmate of an institution, but a roomer in a large and bustling boarding house. She made her living by sewing, and was patronized by most of her fellow-roomers. She was always busy, and made enough to keep herself comfortably and lay a little aside for her future.

Mother Haller was also a weaver of dreams. Sometimes her dreams ran back over her past, her girlhood, her marriage to the father of her children, their early struggles to get started in life, their children. Here her thoughts lingered long.

Those were such happy years when she and John were rearing their family. They thought they were having a hard time, but it had been glorious when they were all together.

Then her dreams hastened on to the time the children left home, one by one, till only Max, the youngest, was left. Then, like a stroke from a clear sky, came John's death, and she was left a widow. She and Max had kept house a while alone, then she had

yielded to their entreaties to make the children all a visit.

Max had been willing, even urged her to go. She had not been away from home six weeks till he wrote a gay letter saying that Nina and he were married, and would spend their honeymoon alone in the old home. When Mother was ready to go back home, which she was loath to do for some reason, she found that Nina was mistress and she was not needed. Max did not sense the injustice of it, and Mother would not stir up trouble, so she left her home, and eventually came here. Since then the old home was sold and her portion of it was put away as a nest-egg.

It was around that little nest-egg that her new dreams wove. Mother Haller wanted a home, a real home of her own, where she could keep house in regular fashion, doing her own cooking, entertaining her company, and be mistress in all that word means.

The second step toward her dream-home was taken when she bought her rug. It was just such a rug as she had always planned to have on her front room and was never able to get in the old days. But this was at a bargain, and she bought it. It was then on her floor, and as she sat at her sewing that quiet morning her eyes turned and rested a loving moment on that rug. It meant much to her. It was the only article of household furniture that was her own. In some mysterious fashion known only in the land of dreams, that rug had come to mean the fulfilling of

her deepest desire. Now that she had her rug she should have the home to put it in.

This dream-home was not pretentious. Two or three rooms would be all she needed, plain and simple furniture, pretty white curtains at the windows, a flower garden, and a small plot where she could raise early vegetables. Even to the color of the paint on the walls she had that house thought out. Somewhere surely there was just such a house waiting for her. As soon as she got money enough together she would search it out and buy it. Why, she was not yet sixty-five, she had years to live, and they need not think they could push her back to the "granny-in-the-corner" stage yet for a while.

The reason Mother Haller had chosen this city as her present home was because Clarice lived here. The children did not want her to live entirely away from all of them. But Clarice and her family had moved away. A business change of some kind had sent them on their way. Young people could get up and move easily, and did not seem to mind it.

And now the children were clamoring at her to come to them. But where should it be? No two of them lived in the same town, and scarcely in the same State, and any of them were liable to leave her stranded, as Clarice had done. It was this problem of moving that Mother Haller was working on as she sat in her room with her sewing in her lap. She knew that in time she would give in and go to live with some of them, but how could she ever do it?

At last it was decided that she should live with Frank and Blanche. When she went to them she took her rug, for she did not give up her dream. She would not be actually needed in the home, and she believed she could find something to do that would help to swell the little fund that she was building.

Frank and Blanche gave her a room to herself, but it was far too small for the rug, so the rug was rolled up and set on end in the corner. Soon it proved itself too much of a nuisance there, and they took it out to the barn and swung it up to a rafter in an unused portion of the rickety old building. It was not safe, but wrapped in paper and swung high, it might not come to harm. There absolutely was no other place to store it.

Mother Haller had a struggle from the time she went to Frank and Blanche. The rug on their front room was shamefully worn, and she soon saw that with their struggle to make both ends meet it would be a long while till they could have another. The second house-cleaning after Mother came Blanche gave up and did not try to put the old rag down again, and the poor little front room surely looked bare, with no rug at all. It hurt Mother Haller, seemed a constant rebuke to her. But she did not give in. Blanche seemed never to have thought about that rug. Mother did not realize how much of her inner feelings she had let out to Blanche's sympathizing ear, and how her daughter-in-law longed to help her to reach the fulfilment of her dreams. In

the meantime Mother was made as welcome as Blanche and her family were able to do.

But when the second year came with no rug on the front room it seemed more than Blanche could stand. Blanche spoke of her great desire for a rug for her front room, but she did not mention Mother's rug. But Mother Haller knew she thought of it. How could she help it, with the rug hanging there unused in plain sight every time she went to the barn.

"Mother," said Blanche one day, "I hate to ask it, but I was looking at your rug the other day. It is getting very soiled out there, and I fear the moths or mice might get at it. I know you want it for the home you wish to buy sometime, but, Mother, it is spoiling out there, and I do need a rug so on my floor. Could I not have it? I am willing to pay you a little at a time." Blanche saw the pained look on Mother's face and paused. "Mother, I hate to ask it, but I see no other way."

"Yes, take it," Mother said as viciously as she had ever spoken. It was as if her last real possession were suddenly snatched from her. It was unfair, entirely unfair.

A little later Blanche felt uneasy about Mother and slipped to her room. She was sure she heard a muffled sob, and pushing the door open she went inside. Mother lay across the bed, her face deep in the pillows, and she was sobbing in all the abandonment of a child.

"Mother, dear Mother!" exclaimed Blanche as she fell on her knees beside the bed, her hands on the dear old head. "Oh, why did I ask it? Mother, I do not want your rug. There, I shall never mention it again. I am selfish. I knew how and why you prized it so, and still I asked it of you. Mother, please forgive me," pleaded the woman.

"It is I who am selfish," sobbed Mother, "and childish, too, I guess. I thought I could get the home, but the years have gone too far now. I see I must give it up. That rug has tortured me all the time I have been here. Take it and use it, Blanche, and never think of it as mine again. I must go a little deeper, be a little more willing to submit. O Blanche, it is hard to think I shall never have a real home again."

"Mother," said Blanche sadly, "we want you to think of this as a real home. We want you to know, Mother, that you are welcome as any of us to all we have."

"I know, daughter, that I am welcome, but that is not what I want. I want a home of my own. So go away and leave me be. Let me fight it out. It is one of the things I must give up. I must bury it as much as I ever buried the dead. Please let me fight it out alone."

Blanche went out, tears wetting her own cheeks. It was another hour before Mother Haller came forth from her Gethsemane. Her face was pale, but serene and calm. She insisted that the rug be brought right

in, and she helped to put it in place and arrange the furniture. There was a smile of triumph on her face as she saw how it brightened the room.

Frank and the children were pleased, of course, but they would never know, and Blanche only partly understand, what that rug had cost.

THE END OF THE ROAD

They had been married forty years. Together they had plodded on through shade and sunshine, cold and heat, winter and summer, foul weather and fair.

There had been times when she had hurt her feet on stones that he might have taken out of her path, stones which she in quick vexation of spirit had accused him of placing in her way. She had wounded her hands upon thorns when she had reached out for roses, and blamed him for the smart.

He had chafed and galled under the yoke and burden of life when he had expected her to pour in healing and soothing balm, ointments which she often lacked. And because of these things he often sat at the breakfast table sullen and silent with his face stubbornly turned away from the one who poured his cup and gave him bread.

She had kept a dry, hard face while he was present and then wept her heart out when she was alone. Or, if breaking the silence, she spoke out her mind, he listened in his stubborn way till her words stung to the quick, and then had given reply in a hard speech that hurt her deeply. Sometimes it had taken weeks for these wounds to heal and sunshine to enter the home again.

As they grew older these dark spots in their life had become far too frequent, until finally the sunny

places were clouded by the memory of them. Life had become hard and unpleasant.

But now they had come to the end of the road. A messenger had arrived to tell them that in a few more days their union would be broken and the husband would go away to another country. The few days were to be filled with pain and weariness for him and anxiety and heartache for her, such as neither of them had ever felt before.

She sat by his bed holding his restless hand, or seeking to comfort his weary head, loving him with a yearning love, seeing not his faults, but her beloved husband going away from her forever.

He remembered now, not the galling yokes and the heavy burdens, but how hard she had tried to do her part, and he told her so. "You have done your best," he said in his weak voice, and her heart was strangely comforted.

And their backward glance together showed not the dark places and deep valleys, but the mountain-tops where the sun shone. How much sunshine there had been, and how much they had meant to each other! How empty her life would be without him! How different it all looked at the end of the road.

We shall leave them, for they are just now entering their own. These days are to them bitter-sweet, for true love is always sweet.

But for us who have not yet reached the end of the road, is there not a lesson for our good? If our eyes are kept open, may we not avoid many of the

dark places, live in the sunshine, and miss those deep valleys of misunderstanding and dissatisfaction?

Can the best be had only in retrospection? Can we not gather out the thorns and remove the stones, pour in the balm and fragrance, and make life pleasant together?

Are gloomy breakfasts and bitter speeches necessary?

It is good for us all to remember that we all must come to the end of the road, where we shall see things from a new angle. Kindness and forbearance now will make that last view more sweet.

FATHER'S FACE

"What a look on Father's face," the daughter said as she glanced across to where he was sitting in his easy-chair. "What perfect peace of mind is written there."

"Yes," was the thoughtful answer, "I have been watching Father of late. He does not take as lively an interest in things of every-day life as he used to do. His thoughts seem to be taken up with other things. He has passed the point where daily cares annoy him. They are of no moment to him, for he is looking ahead. There is always this atmosphere of peace and quiet about him as if he were communing with the Infinite. What a father he has been!"

"Yes," answered the first speaker, "we have been blest in having such a father. No matter what comes in life, we can always know one man who lived a Christian. Such as he can look ahead in peace. His has been a lifetime given to God, a life's influence thrown out for good with one steady purpose through all these years. We can well thank God for such a father."

The daughters smiled very tenderly as they watched the quiet face of the old man.

SUNSET

It was evening and the setting sun sent out shafts of light that, reaching down, entered the room where two old people sat with chairs drawn close together.

His hair was like snow. It was curled softly at his temples. And his long white beard lay upon his breast. His eyes were a deep blue, and calm as an unruffled sea. An open Bible lay upon his knee, and evidently he had been reading, only lifting his eyes to look on the beauty of the sunset.

She was less placid than he, yet her face was restful and quiet, the thin grey hair drawn smoothly back from her brow, and her black eyes softened with tenderness as she looked up at the man she loved, and past him to the beauty of the sunset.

"Mother," he said in a soft and trembling voice, "the day is done. See, the sun is setting and soon the light will be gone. The sunset is beautiful, I think even more beautiful than the morning. I have always loved the sunsets."

"Yes, Father, the sunset is beautiful. Sometimes I think wonderful thoughts that I cannot say when I look on a beautiful sunset." And she folded her tired hands in her lap and smiled as one who has conquered care.

"I know your thoughts, Mother," he said, reaching over to lay his great hand across the hands of his beloved. "The sunsets are like our life. God has been good to us. In life's morning the sunshine of

his love rose in our hearts, and all through our lives he has been with us, giving us strength for the toils of the day. Mother, there have been hard places, and we have seen sorrows like clouds that obscure the sun at noon.

"But at sunset all is clear. The sunset is like the gate of heaven to me. I seem to see across to where the pearly gates open wide. Our sun is setting, and soon the light of our lives must fade. If I go first I know that you will be coming soon, or if I am left alone it will be only for a little while. It cannot be long, for the last rays are almost gone. I have always loved the setting sun, and in life it is the most sweet."

"Yes, Father, you have understood my thoughts. I used to fear lest I might be left alone, but God has let us see the sunset together. I am not afraid, for the love of God is more tender than our love for each other. I, too, love the sunsets, for they are like heaven's open door, waiting for our pilgrim feet."

"Amen," whispered the old husband, as the last sinking ray disappeared in the West.

THE END